

BAYARD TAYLOR'S
TRANSLATION OF GOETHE'S FAUST

BY

JULIANA HASKELL, A.M.

SUBMITTED IN PARTIAL FULFILMENT OF THE REQUIREMENTS FOR
THE DEGREE OF DOCTOR OF PHILOSOPHY, IN THE FACULTY
OF PHILOSOPHY, COLUMBIA UNIVERSITY

NEW YORK.

1908

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TO
SELINA MILLON
AND
WILLIAM H. SHIELDS

NOTE

The criticism of a poetic translation is difficult because the critic will inevitably be tempted to compare it with an ideal which is perhaps forever unattainable. This seems unjust to the translator, because all translation of poetry must be more or less a makeshift. But even such a comparison, if it be scholarly and not finical, has its value—especially when, as in the case of Taylor's version of *Faust*, a definite and rigid theory of translation is involved. The problem attacked by the author of this study is not to decide whether Taylor's version is or is not better than any other, or whether it is or is not the best we are ever likely to get in the exact meters of the original. Her questions are rather: Is it poetry? Does it do the work of poetry when read by one somewhat sensitive to the traditions of English verse? How much of Goethe's poetry has been sacrificed to a theory? It seems to me that Mrs. Haskell's searching study of these questions is interesting and valuable.

CALVIN THOMAS

COLUMBIA UNIVERSITY, January, 1908.

PREFACE

Professor Calvin Thomas suggested to me the theme of this dissertation. I am likewise indebted to Professor Thomas for good counsel and helpful criticism. Courtesies, which have materially furthered my work, were shown me by Mrs. William H. Carpenter, Mrs. Bayard Taylor, Professor Emeritus Edward M. Brown of Cincinnati University, Professor William H. Carpenter of Columbia University, Mr. George W. Harris of Cornell University, Professor Emeritus James M. Hart of Cornell University, Mr. Henry S. Haskell, Professor William A. Hervey of Columbia University, Professor Waterman T. Hewett of Cornell University, Mr. Leonard Mackall and Mr. W. R. Price.

A Roman followed by an Arabic numeral indicates invariably the one-volume edition of Taylor's translation of "Faust," published by Houghton, Mifflin and Company, Boston and New York, bearing no date upon its title page, but copyrighted 1870 and 1898; l. or ll. followed by an Arabic numeral refers to the edition of Goethe's "Faust" edited by Professor Calvin Thomas, who follows the Weimar edition.

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INTRODUCTION

It is the fortune of some books to acquire, early in their career, a certain reputation, which duly formulated, attaches itself to them, and becomes almost as much a part of them as their very titles.

Provided a book is consulted for isolated passages, rather than read as a whole, or provided it is praised and not read at all (and that has been the fate of many a book both before and since Lessing's famous epigram on Klopstock's works), its formulated reputation readily becomes traditional and maintains itself through generations unchallenged.

Thus it has become customary to follow up all mention of Taylor's translation of "Faust" with an obligate corollary relative to its excellence. The public has apparently agreed to accept Taylor's own estimate of that work, and to regard it as "*the* English 'Faust,' which will henceforth be the only one."¹

It is the purpose of this dissertation to inquire into the validity of the enviable reputation which Taylor's "Faust" has now borne for something over one generation.

In order to establish at the outset a *point de repère*, we may seek to determine for whom Taylor translated the "Faust." He did not translate it for the native German, who will read naturally and properly enough his "Faust" in the original. He did not translate it for the English-speaking person, who has an accurate and ready knowledge of German. He, too, will prefer his "Faust" precisely as Goethe wrote it. Taylor very evidently translated "Faust" for that English-speaking person who has sufficient culture to desire to become acquainted with "Faust," but who is cut off from all intelligent enjoyment of the original because he knows no German.

For the purposes of this cultured English-speaking person who has no command of German, and who nevertheless desires

¹ Cf. *Life and Letters*, p. 551.

to know "Faust," it is essential that the translator of "Faust" shall write normal English, that he shall represent Goethe fairly, and, if he determines upon a metrical translation, that he shall invest his rendering with a modicum of poetry, of which meter and rhythm are merely the outer garb. Of these three requirements the first two are imperative, and to my mind the third is equally imperative, provided a metrical rendering is determined upon. Taylor himself, as will be seen by consulting the prefaces to the First and Second Part of his "Faust," believed the retention of the original metrical form to be a matter of paramount importance. Mr. Stedman has, I think, a juster view of relative values. He believes that, in weighing one against the other, the various losses entailed by translation, one can best afford to sacrifice the metrical arrangement.²

Madame von Holtzendorff of Gotha to the contrary notwithstanding, Taylor's translation is not "the perfect equal of the original."³ But I should not think of quarreling with it on that account. Grillparzer is quite right, when he says (as Herder said before him) that poetry cannot be translated.⁴ Imperfection is characteristic of all translation, and more ought not to be exacted of Taylor's work than may reasonably be demanded of any metrical translation of "Faust." It shall be composed in normal English, it shall represent Goethe fairly, and poetry shall be the sole *raison d'être* of its rimes and rhythms.

In an eclectic translation of Goethe's "Faust" certain portions of Taylor's work would no doubt be preserved, for example, perhaps several of the stanzas of the "Song of the Archangels," the entire ballad of the "King of Thule" (although this to be sure is at least fifty per cent. the property of Brooks), and the lines:

And in waves of silver, drifting
On to harvest, rolls the corn.

(II, 5)

² Cf. E. C. Stedman, *Poets of America*, p. 210.

³ Cf. *Life and Letters*, p. 562.

⁴ Cf. *Grillparzers sämtliche Werke*, edited by August Sauer, v. 16, p. 46, and v. 19, p. 59.

The deeps with heavenly light are penetrated;
 The boughs, refreshed, lift up their leafy shimmer
 From gulfs of air where sleepily they waited; (II, 6)

and

When Nature in herself her being founded,
 Complete and perfect then the globe she rounded,
 Glad of the summits and the gorges deep,
 Set rock to rock, and mountain steep to steep,
 The hills with easy outlines downward moulded,
 Till gently from their feet the vales unfolded! (II, 230)

However, in my opinion, the translation as a whole does not meet the demands which may reasonably be made upon it, and it will be my endeavor to show precisely wherein I think it falls short.

CHAPTER I

TAYLOR'S EQUIPMENT FOR HIS TASK

Bayard Taylor's translation of "Faust" was published on December 14, 1870.¹ In honor of the occasion, James T. Fields, the publisher, gave a dinner-party, to which certain of the more notable American men of letters were bidden. John G. Whittier found himself unable to attend this dinner-party, and declined the hospitality of Mr. and Mrs. Fields in a gracious note, in which he said, "It seems to me that he (*i. e.*, Taylor) is precisely the man of all others to do it" (*i. e.*, translate "Faust").² To establish Whittier's statement, that Taylor was the man of all men to translate "Faust," would require an interminable application of the process of exclusion. A less ambitious statement to the effect that Taylor was especially equipped for his task admits of practical discussion.

Whittier did not ask his host and hostess to accept his unsupported pronouncement. He gave his reasons for the faith that was in him. After jocosely deprecating the fact that Taylor labored "under the misfortune of not having been born in sight of Boston meeting-house," he continues, "In the first place . . . he inherits from his ancestry the Quaker gift of spiritual appreciation and recognition, the belief not only in his own revelations, but in those of others. In the second place, he is a poet himself. Thirdly, he has studied man and nature in all lands and in all their phases, and fourthly, he has brought himself into the closest possible association with the culture and sentiment, the intellect and the heart of the Germany of Goethe, by bringing under his roof-tree at Cedar-croft an estimable countrywoman of Charlotte and Margaret, Natalie and Dorothea."³

¹ Cf. *Life and Letters*, p. 542.

² Cf. *Life and Letters*, p. 543.

³ Cf. *Life and Letters*, v. II, p. 543 f.

Mrs. Taylor and Mr. Scudder have set forth their reasons too for "the real power which enabled him (Taylor) to cope with the profoundest difficulty in translating 'Faust.'"⁴ Their reasons, briefly summarized, are: (1) He was a poet. (2) He was ripe for Goethe's thought. (3) He was in a creative mood, "constructing part by part a great poem which lay alongside of 'Faust,' singularly harmonious with the original."⁵ (4) "He had a remarkable memory . . ." which "was of great value to him in his work of translation, since it released his mind from the necessity of a fatiguing hunt after particulars, and enabled him to hold steadily before his imagination the large thought of the verse, to make comparisons with instantaneous readiness, and to move freely and unembarrassed through his material."⁶

It is possible to phrase certain of Taylor's qualifications for his task with a shade more of exactitude. I should find Taylor's fitness in his command of the technique of poetry rather than in the fact that he was a poet. To write Bayard Taylor a poet requires so many qualifying appendages; nor is there any qualifying formula which is everywhere satisfactory. Taylor's good friend, R. H. Stoddard, says Taylor was not a great poet.⁷ Nor was he even a leading poet in a country, which, according to Mr. Edmund Gosse, has no great poets.⁸ He is not of the favored four (Longfellow, Bryant, Emerson and Poe) whose merits Mr. Gosse believes may be "discussed in connection with the highest honors in the art." Even when Professor Curtis Hidden Page extends the number of the chief American poets to nine,⁹ still Bayard Taylor is not of them. Mr. Walter Lewin, an English critic, grudgingly allows Taylor's poethood, but with qualifications, saying, "he

⁴ Cf. *Life and Letters*, v. II, p. 556.

⁵ Mrs. Taylor and Mr. Scudder refer doubtless to the "Masque of the Gods" published in 1872.

⁶ Cf. *Life and Letters*, v. II, pp. 556 ff.

⁷ Cf. *North American Review*, v. 130, p. 98: *Bayard Taylor's Poetic Works*; "It will not do to say that he was a great poet, for great poets are rare."

⁸ Cf. *Forum*, v. VI, pp. 176-186. "Has America produced a poet?"

⁹ Cf. *The Chief American Poets*, by Curtis Hidden Page, Ph.D., Boston, New York, etc., 1905.

was something else in the first place, and a poet only in the second place. Readers of this biography¹⁰ will be impressed more by the business talent he displayed than by any other single characteristic. He knew prices and values in the literary market as well as any broker knows what corn and cotton are worth. . . . His letters are not the letters of a poet, but of a man of the world . . . he postponed poetry to the acquisition of wealth, giving the best and, as it proved, nearly all the years of his life to the latter. . . . If he had been a poet first of all, he could not have treated poetry as a commodity to be laid by until—other requirements being satisfied—there should be leisure to enjoy it . . . as a man of the world first, and as a poet second, Bayard Taylor must be regarded.”¹¹ Finally a nameless critic, otherwise kindly enough disposed, comments on poems which Stoddard esteemed “superior to anything of their kind in the English language,”¹² and states (provided *poeta nascitur non fit* still prevail) that he is not certain that Bayard Taylor is a poet at all.¹³

Even if one incline to believe with Mr. Howells¹⁴ and with

¹⁰ Mr. Lewin is reviewing the *Life and Letters* by Mrs. Taylor and Mr. Scudder.

¹¹ Cf. *Academy*, v. XXVI, p. 299.

¹² Cf. *New York Tribune*, December 20, 1878.

¹³ Cf. *North American Review*, review of *Poems of the Orient*, v. LXXX, p. 266. “Mr. Taylor’s volume contains a large amount of healthy, manly sentiment, such as does credit to his mental and moral nature; and yet we a little doubt whether he is a born poet.” Cf. also *National Quarterly Review*, December, 1862, pp. 176 ff., review of the *Poet’s Journal*: “We shall say no more on the propriety or impropriety of writing such a ‘Journal,’ assuming the poetry to be real; but we think that, although Plato would exclude the poets from his model Republic, Mr. Taylor would have little to fear; for he would readily pass muster as being very nearly, if not entirely, innocent of ‘the sacred fire that leads astray.’ To be frank we cannot see that Mr. Taylor has any just claim to the title he assumes, let us apply what test we may to his efforts. ‘Celui-là seul est poète,’ says Laharpe, ‘qui sait dire de belles et bonnes choses, non seulement sans que la mesure et la rime leur ôtent rien, mais même de manière que la mesure et la rime leur donnent plus d’effet et d’éclat.’”

¹⁴ Cf. *Harper’s Weekly*, v. 40, p. 294, review of Smyth’s “Bayard Taylor”: “. . . his poetry remains. I do not mean that it all remains or will remain; but I do mean that in any story of our literature his place as a poet is secure. His place as a poet is secure in the hearts of all lovers of poetry, by at least virtue of three or four pieces which are

Mr. Stedman,¹⁵ that Taylor really was a poet, the degree of Taylor's poetic gift could hardly be established without recourse to Professor W. P. Trent's sliding scale,¹⁶ an ingenious and benevolent, but in the present case not wholly satisfactory method of disposing those men whose work is neither first nor perhaps second rate, but who must still be reckoned as poets.

There would, I believe, be unanimity in excluding Bayard Taylor peremptorily from Professor Trent's first and second classes. It is conceded that he is neither "supreme" nor yet "very great." But when it comes to determining in which of the three remaining classes he is to be ranged, there are many minds. Some maintain he was "great"; others grant he was "important"; Professor Trent,¹⁷ for example, considers him "minor"; and there are possibly some few (Professor Barrett Wendell¹⁸ may be of them) who insist that Bayard Taylor belongs to the body which Professor Trent declines to classify, "authors who won applause for a day but were soon forgotten and need not be revived."

most distinctly and entirely his own." Of this latter point Professor Barrett Wendell is not so sure. Cf. *A Literary History of America*, p. 455: "From boyhood Taylor had travelled, and had written, and had read poetry, and had tried to be a poet; and he certainly made something which looks poetic. As surely, however, as his verse never touched the popular heart, so his supreme literary effort never much appealed to those who seriously love poetry."

¹⁵ Cf. *Scribner's Monthly*, v. 19, p. 81: "We find ourselves observing a true poet." In *Poets of America*, p. 396, Mr. Stedman modifies this to: "We find ourselves observing one whose ideal was higher than anything which his writings, abundant as they are, express for us, and one who none the less has claims to be estimated in some degree by that ideal."

¹⁶ Cf. *International Monthly*, v. 5, p. 505, "The Question of 'Greatness in Literature.'"

¹⁷ Cf. Trent: *American Literature*, p. 472. "Ablers men than Bayard Taylor have not in the end obtained so high a place among minor poets as seems likely to be his."

¹⁸ Cf. Barrett Wendell: *A Literary History of America*, pp. 455-458; "Early in middle life Bayard Taylor had unquestionably attained such literary eminence as is involved in having one's name generally known. The limits of this eminence, however, appeared even while he was alive; if you asked people what he had written, the chances were they could not tell. . . . His ambition was to make a great poem. In view of this there is something pathetic in the list of forgotten titles he has left us."

It seems better, therefore, to place our emphasis upon a point concerning which more concord obtains among competent persons. Taylor's technical skill as a maker of verse has been very generally acknowledged. Mr. Howells commends the "technical perfection"¹⁹ of Taylor's versé. Mr. Congdon doubts "if in any of his poems a slovenly line or an intolerable rhyme can be found."²⁰ Professor Trent says, "He was almost never careless in his workmanship."²¹ Onderdonk asserts that "none of our verse writers, aside from the Cambridge poet (*i. e.*, Longfellow) has given so much attention to form."²² Stoddard believed that deficiency of technical skill had never been charged against Taylor.²³ Indeed, it is possible that the poems of Taylor suffered from an excess of art. Mr. Stedman regards "his facility" as "dangerous indeed."²⁴ And Stoddard wrote, "If he sinned in his poetic practice, it was in the direction of art, of which he possessed too much rather than too little."²⁵ But the point which we are eager to make has been best put by Mr. A. H. Smyth, who speaks of Taylor as a "*meister-singer*,—a guild-singer,—a man of talent, and master of the mechanics of his craft."²⁶

Taylor was conscious apparently of his cunning, and delighted in poetical *tours de force*—the greatest of them all being "Faust." He tried his hand at almost every form of

¹⁹ Cf. review of *Home Pastorals, Ballads and Lyrics*, *Atlantic*, v. XXXVII, p. 108.

²⁰ Cf. C. T. Congdon, *Reminiscences of a Journalist*, Boston, 1880, p. 244. Mr. Congdon was over sanguine, as will be seen in the event.

²¹ Cf. Trent, *American Literature*, p. 472.

²² Cf. Onderdonk, *History of American Verse*, p. 235.

²³ Cf. *North American Review*, v. 130, p. 98: "Bayard Taylor's Poetical Works"; Stoddard's carelessness (hardly that of the type-setter) makes him say, "Technical skill in which Mr. Joyce, and Mr. Arnold in a less degree, are deficient, was never charged against Mr. Bayard Taylor"—something quite the reverse of course, of that which Stoddard was attempting to say.

²⁴ *Scribner's Monthly*, "Bayard Taylor. His Poetry and Literary Career," v. XIX, pp. 81 ff.

²⁵ Cf. *North American Review*, v. 130, p. 98.

²⁶ Cf. Smyth, *Bayard Taylor*, p. 273.

verse, lyric, epic, idyllic, dramatic.²⁷ His "Prince Deukalion," approved by Mr. G. P. Lathrop as a "profitable study for metrical artists everywhere,"²⁸ exhibits an "excess of rhythmic beauty,"²⁹ vying with "Faust" itself in metrical variety. Taylor took keen pleasure in employing difficult and unusual meters.³⁰ He could reproduce the feminine and dactylic rimes of "Faust," "which have been for the most part omitted by all metrical translators except Mr. Brooks."³¹ Within the compass of his "Picture of St. John" he produced "more than seventy variations in the order of rhyme."³² He indulged to the point of mannerism in those things which make up the outward appurtenances and pomp of poetry. Of Taylor's very first book, Mr. Stedman said: "One quality is apparent which afterward marked his verse—a peculiar sonorousness, especially in the use of resonant proper nouns, the names of historic persons and places."³³ It would seem, therefore, that we are abundantly cautious when we write Bayard Taylor a clever craftsman.

The reminiscent note discoverable in Taylor's poetry again suggests a special qualification as a translator. This reminiscent note is found not alone in the minority poems, where we

²⁷ Cf. *Studies in Poetry and Criticism*, London, 1905, p. 58 f., by John Churton Collins: "In serious poetry, there was scarcely any note which he did not strike. Studies from the Greek, studies in Oriental life, studies in Italian life, studies in Pennsylvanian, in Californian, in Norse life: lyrics in every key and in almost every measure, Pindaric, Hafizian, Shelleyan; threnody and dithyramb, love-song and war-song, state-song and ballad: narratives and idylls of equal range and variety: drama, ideal, realistic, lyrical."

²⁸ Cf. *Atlantic*, v. 43, p. 117.

²⁹ Cf. *Scribner's Monthly*, v. 19, p. 266.

³⁰ Cf. *Faust*, II, pref., p. xiv: "I am not aware that either the iambic trimeter or the trochaic tetrameter has ever been introduced into English verse." Cf. also *Picture of St. John* (1866), Introductory Note, p. iv: "I know of but one instance in which the experiment (*i. e.*, employing the ottava rima, adhering rigidly to the measure and limit of the stanza, yet allowing freedom of rhyme within that limit) has been even partially tried—the 'Oberon' of Wieland."

³¹ Cf. *Faust*, I, pref., p. xvi.

³² Cf. *Picture of St. John*, edition of 1866, Introductory Note, p. vi.

³³ Cf. *Scribner's Monthly*, v. 19, p. 81.

should on the whole expect it,³⁴ but throughout Taylor's poems.³⁵ It is sometimes a matter of epithet.³⁶ Thus his

³⁴ Cf. *Scribner's Monthly*, v. 19, p. 81: "Byron, Scott, Moore, Mrs. Hemans, Bryant, are echoed here and there," (*i. e.*, in *Ximena*, 1844).

³⁵ Cf. *Academy*, v. 9, p. 95, review of *Home Pastorals, Ballads, and Lyrics*: "It is not so easy to give an idea of the subject of these *Pastorals*. Mr. Bayard Taylor goes into the country (apparently at various times), and 'moralizes at large.' He sees a naked Irishman, and improves him promptly. He alludes frequently to his travels, and at last comes to an end rather piously. . . . *Ballads and Lyrics* are, in one respect, rather more satisfactory than *Home Pastorals*, in that it is often possible to discover their import with a fair amount of labour and luck. It is also a possible, and indeed an unavoidable, discovery that Mr. Bayard Taylor has evidently bestowed on the poets (his brother-poets, we suppose he would say) of England and America a careful and not infructuous perusal. The already mentioned descant upon the naked Irishman would assuredly never have been written but for certain pages in *Leaves of Grass*. And we must take leave to doubt whether 'The Old Pennsylvania Farmer' does not owe his existence to a certain Lincolnshire prototype; whether 'In My Vineyard' has not to pay copyright to 'Amphion'; and whether 'Iris' would not do well to announce herself as a bastard of the 'Cloud.' Furthermore we think that 'Implora Pace' might as well acknowledge indebtedness to part of Mr. Arnold's 'Switzerland,' and that 'Run Wild' exhibits signs of something more than admiration of the 'Haunted House.' Finally, 'Canopus' shows, if it shows nothing else, that Mr. Taylor is a diligent and appreciative student of the 'Dream of Fair Women.' That these likenesses do not exist in our imagination, any qualified student of poetry will perceive as soon as he opens the book, and we cannot help thinking it is a pity. The pity is all the more pitiful because Mr. Taylor, with many short-comings (what on earth makes him rhyme 'weather' with 'ether,' and commit the horrible atrocity of making the second syllable of *adytum* long?) has certain mechanical capabilities about him, and is by no means inorganic. . . . It is indeed a pity that an instrument of such excellent tone and range should not be at the disposal of a truer artist, and should not discourse more original music."

³⁶ Cf. *Life and Letters*, v. II, p. 685: James T. Fields, the publisher, took Taylor to task for appropriating in his "National Ode" the "feather-cinctured" of Gray. Taylor replied, "I have tired my brain to no purpose about the epithet. These are the lines:

No more a Chieftainess, with wampum-zone
And feather-cinctured brow.

Now, I can't say either 'feather-girdled' or 'feather-belted,' after using *zone*. There only remains 'feather-banded,' which sounds flat and *millinerish*. Gray says 'feather-cinctured chiefs,' referring to a feather petticoat, hanging from the waist; and in the same line he steals 'dusky loves' from Pope! Why shouldn't I take what, after all, is probably not Gray's own? Is it worth while to be tender towards such an intolerant old thief as he? As for what may be said of me, I don't regard it at all.

"trumpet snarling"³⁷ savors of Keats,³⁸ his "multitudinous . . . Ocean"³⁹ of Shakspeare.⁴⁰ Again it is a matter of cadence.

"Ernest will come!" the early sunbeams cried;
 "Will come!" was breathed through all the woodlands wide;
 "Will come, will come!" said cloud, and brook, and bird;
 And when the hollow roll of wheels was heard
 Across the bridge, it thundered, "He is near!"
 And then my heart made answer, "He is here!"⁴¹

straightway recalls Tennyson.⁴² Sometimes Taylor's theme itself is reminiscent. "The Soldier and the Pard" has more than one point of contact with "The Ancient Mariner"; the "Ode to Indolence"⁴³ has much in common with the song of the "Lotos Eaters"; and the lines

"Two spirits dwell in us; one chaste and pale,
 A still recluse, whose garments know no stain, etc."⁴⁴

inevitably conjure up Goethe.⁴⁵ Finally there are strange double echoes, as when

"Thy soul is lonely as a star,
 When all its fellows muffled are,—"⁴⁶

I swear to you, I never thought of Gray till you mentioned the fact. The adjective came of itself and therefore insists on staying. There is no poet living, or who ever has lived, who does not occasionally take a marked word from another. Even Goethe took Schiller's *Donnergang*, and got all the credit of it, until I first pointed out where it came from. Tennyson is full of such use, and so is anybody you can name. Give me an equally good epithet, and I'll burn incense under your photograph!" Professor Calvin Thomas has pointed out to me that "*Donnergang*" really belongs to Klopstock.

³⁷ Cf. *The Test*, stanza I.

³⁸ Cf. *The Eve of St. Agnes*, stanza IV.

³⁹ Cf. *Faust*, II, p. 145, l. 5.

⁴⁰ Cf. *Macbeth*, Act II, Sc. 2.

⁴¹ Cf. *The Poet's Journal*, First Evening.

⁴² Cf. *Maud*, XXII, stanza X.

⁴³ This poem, it is only fair to state, is omitted in the definitive ed. of 1902. Taylor's poem "The Summer Camp" smacks similarly of the "Lotos Eaters"; cf. *Putnam's Magazine*, v. VII, p. 109: "His (*i. e.*, Bayard Taylor's) fine poem of the 'Summer Camp' would have been finer than it is, had he not happened to think of the 'Lotos-Eaters.'"

⁴⁴ Cf. *Picture of St. John, The Artist*, stanza XXXV.

⁴⁵ Cf. l. 1112 ff.

⁴⁶ Cf. Taylor's *Serapion*.

suggests at once Wordsworth's "I wandered lonely as a cloud," and the same poet's "Fair as a star when only one is shining in the sky." Taylor himself was not unconscious of this reminiscent note, for he once wrote, "Every author is familiar with the insidious way in which old phrases or images, which have preserved themselves in the mind but forgotten their origin, will quietly slip into places when the like of them is needed."⁴⁷

More than this, Taylor was constantly frankly and avowedly imitating other poets. The divinity of his early days was Shelley,⁴⁸ "from whose weird and ethereal influence Taylor never quite freed himself, nor desired to free himself, until his dying day."⁴⁹ Even the "Bedouin Song," which anthologists have made us regard as peculiarly Taylor's own, shows strongly the influence of Shelley, although in token of such influence I would quote the second stanza rather than the first stanza, as Professor Beers does.⁵⁰ As early as 1848⁵¹ Taylor commenced to imitate the work of other poets as a sort of intellectual sport, in which Stoddard and Fitz James O'Brien shared. "Fitz James O'Brien," says Stoddard, "was a frequent guest, and an eager partaker of our merriment, which somehow resolved itself into the writing of burlesque poems. We sat around a table, and whenever the whim seized us, which was often enough, we each wrote down themes on little pieces of paper, and putting them into a hat or a box we drew out one at random, and then scribbled away for dear life. We put no restriction upon ourselves; we could be grave, or gay, or idiotic even, but we must be rapid, for half the fun was in noting who first sang out, 'Finished!' It was a neck-and-neck race between Bayard Taylor and Fitz James O'Brien, who divided the honors pretty equally, and whose verses, I am compelled to admit, were generally better than my own.

⁴⁷ Cf. *Essays and Notes*, Tennyson, p. 22.

⁴⁸ Cf. *Atlantic*, v. XLIII, pp. 242 ff. Reminiscences of Bayard Taylor by R. H. Stoddard. Cf. also *Bayard Taylor's Poems*, Household Edition (1902), p. 213, "Christmas Sonnets, To R. H. S.," "I Shelley's mantle wore, you that of Keats."

⁴⁹ Cf. *Scribner's Monthly*, v. XIX, pp. 81 ff.

⁵⁰ Cf. Beers, *Initial Studies in American Literature*, p. 172.

⁵¹ Cf. *Life and Letters*, v. I, p. 132.

Bayard Taylor was very dexterous in seizing the salient points of the poets we girded at, and was as happy as a child when his burlesques were successful."⁵²

This sort of poetic diversion Bayard Taylor seems never to have dropped. At any rate, it was cultivated at the Sunday soirées of the Taylors during the winter of 1863-1864.⁵³ The public first had an opportunity to applaud Taylor's cleverness at imitation, when the "Battle of the Bards" appeared in the *Tribune*.⁵⁴ Altered and amplified the "Battle of the Bards" was metamorphosed into the anonymous "Echo Club" of the *Atlantic* (1872) and the authorship was avowed when the "Echo Club" came out in book form in 1876.

It is a pity, I think, that we Americans assume so condescending an attitude toward works of humor, that we persist in regarding them as essentially ephemeral, and relegate them—anywhere outside of literature. Something of this national condescension crops out, when Professor Trent says, "It is pathetic to find him (*i. e.*, Bayard Taylor) . . . publishing parodies on popular poets."⁵⁵ It happens, however, that the "Echo Club," the publishing of which Professor Trent finds so pathetic, is esteemed by Mr. Howells as "the best parodies ever written,"⁵⁶ in which opinion he is supported by Robert Browning.⁵⁷ Unfortunately Professor Trent has the reading public with him. The "Echo Club" fell flat, when published anonymously in the *Atlantic*. It was received with indiffer-

⁵² Cf. *Atlantic*, v. XLIII, p. 242.

⁵³ Cf. *Aus Zwei Weltteilen*, p. 108; "Wir waren die ersten, die es wagten, am 'Sabbat' ein 'At Home' zu haben. . . . An diesen Abenden pflegten die 'Diversionen,' denen Bayard Taylor später im 'Echoklub' feste Gestalt verlieh, eine geist- und humor-sprühende Unterhaltung zu gewähren."

⁵⁴ Cf. *Aus Zwei Weltteilen*, p. 159.

⁵⁵ Cf. Trent, *American Literature*, p. 470.

⁵⁶ Cf. *Atlantic*, January, 1877, p. 92; review of "Echo Club."

⁵⁷ Cf. *Life and Letters*, v. II, p. 620: Taylor writes, "Story told me that Browning sent him the 'Echo Club' last summer, with a note saying it was the best thing of the kind he had ever seen, and that if he had found the imitations of himself in a volume of his poems he would have believed that he actually wrote them!"

ence when it appeared in book form⁵⁸ and it is now quite forgotten. If we would take our humor more seriously, as the English do, we have in the "Echo Club" a classic in its kind, with which to confront confidently the "Bab Ballads," or any of the productions of Edward Lear, Charles Stuart Calverly, or Charles Lutwidge Dodgson. In my estimation the "Echo Club" is the best of the works of Bayard Taylor, the only one of which one may speak with almost⁵⁹ unqualified praise.

We are to ascribe, I believe, the reminiscent note in Taylor's poems, and the brilliancy of his parodies in part to his abnormally retentive memory,⁶⁰ in part to that skill in technique, which apprehended and reproduced with consummate ease the idiosyncrasies of others, in part, thinks a writer in the "Encyclopædia Britannica," to Taylor's lyrical faculty.⁶¹

⁵⁸ Cf. *Life and Letters*, v. II, p. 690: ". . . it was worse than irony to him that so clever and skillful a bit of work (*i. e.*, the "Echo Club") should have fallen upon an apathetic public."

⁵⁹ I say "almost" because I think Mr. Howells is right when he says: "We never thought the machinery (*i. e.*, the prose in which the parodies are embedded) of The Echo Club a very fortunate conception. . . . The comment is well enough, but the critical analysis of the authors parodied is not of unusual fineness, and too much of the talk consists of needless apology for taking the liberty to travesty, and of protest that no harm is meant." *Atlantic*, January, 1877, p. 92. Mr. Stedman thinks (or thought) otherwise. He says: "So good are its (*i. e.*, the "Echo Club") imitations of modern poets that this book takes rank with 'Rejected Addresses,'—so good, in truth, that upon reading the prose dialogue which connects them, we are not surprised to find it made up of some of the most wholesome, kind, and alert criticism that has appeared in recent times." *Scribner's Monthly*, v. XIX, pp. 266 ff. It is to be noted that when Mr. Stedman came to write his chapter on Bayard Taylor in *Poets of America*, which is based often verbatim upon the earlier article in *Scribner's Monthly*, he omits the passage just quoted.

⁶⁰ Cf. *Lippincott*, August, 1879, p. 209, H. H. Boyesen: "Reminiscences of Bayard Taylor": "I have frequently heard Mr. Taylor complain that his memory was an inconvenience to him. He would read by chance some absurd or absolutely colorless verse, and it would continue to haunt him for days. One single reading sometimes sufficed to fix a poem indelibly in his mind. The first part of *Faust* I verily believe he could repeat from beginning to end. . . . Even the second part, with its evasive and impalpable meanings, he had partly committed to memory; or, rather, it had, without any effort of his own, committed itself to his memory."

⁶¹ Cf. *Britannica*, *sub voce* Taylor, Bayard; "He had, from the earliest period at which he began to compose, a distinct lyrical faculty: so keen indeed was his ear that he became too insistently haunted by the music of others."

Undoubtedly Bayard Taylor's excellent knowledge of German—a language he spoke with ever-increasing ease from his twenty-first year on⁶²—equipped him in no slight degree to translate "Faust." An equally important asset (if not the most important of all) in the undertaking was his wife Marie Hansen. Any attempt to show Bayard Taylor's heavy obligation to his wife is partially thwarted by Mrs. Taylor's own beautiful but perverse modesty. One yearns with a writer in a recent number of the *Nation* "to know Marie Hansen's part in his literary development and in his masterpiece, the 'Faust.'"⁶³ One need await, however, no disclosures from Mrs. Taylor. She remains consistent in her attitude of self-depreciation. "Einstmals, klagte ich, dass ich eine so prosaische Lebensgefährtin für ihn sei, so wenig beanlagt, ihm geistig ebenbürtig zur Seite zu stehen, wie es bei dem Browningschen Paar oder bei Dick und Lizzie Stoddard der Fall sei."⁶⁴ None the less it is distinctly symbolic, I think, that the German text, on which Taylor based his "Faust," was one of his wedding gifts.⁶⁵

It cannot be directly proven that Mrs. Taylor stimulated her husband's study of Goethe in general and of the "Faust" in particular. But it can be shown that Taylor's interest in Goethe synchronizes with the advent of Marie Hansen into his life. We know that Taylor possessed the complete works of Goethe when he returned from his first visit to Europe (1846).⁶⁶ But we have no record in the *Life and Letters* that he read them before 1857, the year of his marriage. Of the Germans, it is Schiller whom he reads;⁶⁷ Schiller's "Life and Genius," on which he is prepared to lecture;⁶⁸ Schiller whom

⁶² Cf. *At Home and Abroad*, I, p. 34, "First Difficulties with Foreign Tongues"; "Mr. Willis deposited me safely in the *eilwagen* for Heidelberg, where [in Heidelberg doubtless] I remained quietly until I knew enough German to travel with ease and comfort." This was in 1845.

⁶³ Cf. *Nation*, v. LXXXII, p. 100, review of *On Two Continents*.

⁶⁴ Cf. *Aus Zwei Weltteilen*, p. 70.

⁶⁵ Cf. *Aus Zwei Weltteilen*, p. 41.

⁶⁶ Cf. *Life and Letters*, v. I, p. 100.

⁶⁷ Cf. *Life and Letters*, v. I, p. 102; cf. also *ibid.*, p. 209.

⁶⁸ Cf. *Life and Letters*, v. I, p. 197.

he learns by heart, and recites in the temples of India;⁶⁹ Schiller, who, together with Shelley, influences the first period of his poetic work.⁷⁰

As far as I am able to learn the first bit of Taylor's Faust-translation which was printed was the "Soldiers' Song" of the First Part, which appeared as a "Song from Goethe" in 1859.⁷¹ Taylor was conscious of "something rich and strange" when he first turned to Goethe, for he wrote in 1866, "My studies now are changed from what they once were. I read first of all Goethe. . . . I abhor everything spasmodic and sensational, and aim at the purest, simplest, quietest style in whatever I write."⁷²

It is clear from Taylor's letters that his wife was his literary adviser. He consulted her first in regard to whatever he wrote,⁷³ and he found her a keen critic.⁷⁴ In matters German this was bound to be peculiarly so. It is quite natural, as Mr. Stedman says, that "she confirmed his taste for the thought and letters of her Fatherland, and was his constant aid in the study of them."⁷⁵

⁶⁹ Cf. *Aus Zwei Weltteilen*, p. 38.

⁷⁰ Cf. *Poetical Works*, Household Ed., 1902, pref., p. iv.

⁷¹ Cf. *Knickerbocker Magazine*, March, 1859, p. 277.

⁷² Cf. *Life and Letters*, v. II, p. 459 f.

⁷³ Cf. *Life and Letters*, v. II, p. 565: "My wife says the plan so far is very successful." Cf. *ibid.*, p. 575, "Not a soul here has read the 'Masque' except my wife." Cf. *ibid.*, p. 634, ". . . no one here, except my wife, has any suspicion of what I have done." Cf. *ibid.*, p. 651, "Except my wife, the only human being who has seen the MS. is Boker." In this connection the letters which passed between Taylor and his wife, during the composition of the "Prophet," are instructive. Mrs. Taylor at the time was under a physician's care in Leipzig, while Taylor was mostly in Weimar. Cf. *Aus Zwei Weltteilen*, p. 179, "Hier und da frage ich mich, ob Dir wohl diese oder jene Stelle gefallen wird, ich bin aber meiner Sache nie ganz sicher." Cf. *ibid.*, p. 181; "Ich bin bei der siebenten und letzten Szene, die morgen fertig wird; so kann ich Dir also den ganzen Akt mitbringen." Cf. *ibid.*, p. 185; "Da alle Fäden der Handlung jetzt zusammengespunnen sind, so bin ich sicher, dass ich Akt V in der nächsten Woche vollenden kann. Dann komme ich auf eine Woche nach Leipzig. Einstweilen aber erwarte mich diesen Sonnabend, denn ich muss Dir Akt IV vorlesen, ehe ich Akt V schreibe."

⁷⁴ Cf. *Life and Letters*, v. II, p. 599: "I have no audience or adviser here but M., who is all the keener because a loving critic."

⁷⁵ Cf. *Poets of America*, p. 369.

Mrs. Taylor's precise share in the translation of "Faust," has, as far as I know, been nowhere recorded. But that she did share in the great task of her husband, is admitted by Taylor himself.

This plant, it may be, grew from vigorous seed,
 Within the field of study set by song;
 Sent from its sprouting germ, perchance, a throng
 Of roots even to that depth where passions breed;
 Chose its own time, and of its place took heed;
 Sucked fittest nutriment to make it strong:—
 But you from every wayward season's wrong
 Did guard it, showering, at its changing need,
 Or dew of sympathy, or summer glow
 Of apprehension of the finer toil,
 And gave it so the nature that endures,
 Our secret this, the world can never know:
 You were the breeze and sunshine, I the soil:
 The form is mine, color and odor yours! ⁷⁶

It remains finally to be noted that Taylor himself would have found one of his chief qualifications as a translator in the fact that he was an American.⁷⁷ He admitted that he indulged "the hope that the great poets of other lands and ages may receive their fittest English speech through American authors." And he adds, "The divergence of our national temperament from its original character, is in this respect a fortunate circumstance. A great many causes have combined to make the American a much more flexible, sympathetic, impressionable creature than his ancestor or cotemporary cousin. Not being born to fixed habits of thought, he more easily assumes, or temporarily identifies himself with those of other races; he is more competent to shift his point of view; he is more capable of surrendering himself to foreign influences, and recovering his native manner when the occasion has passed. His power of sensation is keener, his capacity for enthusiasm greater."⁷⁸

⁷⁶ Cf. *Poetical Works*, Household Edition, 1884, p. 214 f.: "To Marie. With a copy of the translation of Faust."

⁷⁷ Cf. *Life and Letters*, v. II, p. 478: "We Americans make better translators than the English, and we shall drive the latter out of the field."

⁷⁸ Cf. *Critical Essays and Literary Notes*, p. 258 f.

Such a *résumé* of Taylor's equipment prepares the reader to find his "Faust" poetically indifferent or at best uneven. On the other hand he will expect to find it admirable in all those things which may be achieved by technical skill; by continued experience in the imitation of other poets; by as thorough a mastery of the German language as a foreigner can well obtain;⁷⁹ by hard work;⁸⁰ by the adaptability of an American temperament; and by the aid of a competent and enthusiastic collaboratrice.

⁷⁹ Cf. *National Quarterly Review*, September, 1871, p. 373. Ludwig Fulda would regard Taylor's exceptional knowledge of German as a matter of small moment. Fulda, in his delightful essay, "Die Kunst des Übersetzers" (Cf. *Aus der Werkstatt*, p. 157 f.), says in part: "Nach alledem kann füglich kein Zweifel mehr obwalten, worauf es beim Übersetzen hauptsächlich ankommt. Nicht auf die Beherrschung der fremden, sondern auf die Beherrschung der eignen Sprache. Bei der fremden kann dem Übersetzer das Wissen anderer zu Hilfe kommen; bei der eigenen ist er ausschliesslich auf sein persönliches Können angewiesen. Nur als einen weiteren Beleg für diese Behauptung führe ich die Tatsache an, dass ein und dieselbe Person zwar *aus* mehreren Sprachen, aber keineswegs *in* mehrere Sprachen künstlerisch übersetzen kann."

⁸⁰ Cf. Letter of Charles T. Congdon, *New York Tribune*, December 20, 1878: "Of all the literary men whom I have known, I should speak of him (*i. e.*, Bayard Taylor) as the least afraid of work."

CHAPTER II

CONCERNING BAYARD TAYLOR'S THEORY OF TRANSLATION

Bayard Taylor had a theory of translation. It will be found set forth in certain of his letters,¹ in his review of Bryant's translation of the *Iliad*,² but with most emphasis in the prefaces of the First and Second Part of his "Faust." Some of the principles involved by his theory Taylor enunciates with so much ardor, that his tone appears frankly controversial; we shall discuss those principles last.

Among those qualities which Taylor believed to be essential to an excellent translation were these:

I. "That abnegation of the translator's personality through which alone the original author can receive justice."³ In this particular Taylor strove to practice what he preached. He wrote to Mr. Stedman, after the appearance of the "Faust": "The difference you notice between MS. and print is partly owing to the severe final revision, in which I tested every word once more and sternly struck out whatever seemed to have the least reflection of *me*, though it might have been more agreeable to eye and ear. I can see nothing, now, that is not Goethe."⁴ Taylor commends Brooks for the "abnegation of the translator's own tastes and habits of thought,"

¹ Cf. *Life and Letters*. Professor James Morgan Hart, in a letter to the writer, says: "To the best of my recollection, his (Taylor's) letters to me did not embody any general theory of translation; only his and my opinions on the accuracy of certain of his renderings. Having handled his correspondence here, to get it in chronological sequence, I retain a vague general impression of the growth and movement of his mind. And this vague impression prompts me to say that his translation-theory can be got only from a careful study of his earlier correspondence with his intimate friends, George H. Boker, Stoddard, Stedman, etc." The letters of which Professor Hart speaks are all at Cornell, but Mrs. Bayard Taylor refuses to have them inspected by any person during her life.

² Cf. *Essays and Notes*, p. 258.

³ Cf. *Essays and Notes*, p. 258.

⁴ Cf. *Life and Letters*, v. II, p. 548.

for his "reverent desire to present the original in its purest form."⁵ Elsewhere he writes: "We reckon it as one of the great excellences of Mr. Bryant's version (*i. e.*, of the *Iliad*), that it suggests nothing of the individual manner of the translator, except, indeed, those pure artistic qualities which are above all individual characteristics of genius."⁶

2. "A translator should have a nearly equal knowledge of both languages, in order to get that spirit above and beyond the words which simple literalness will never give. The best condition is that in which one knows both languages so well that he does not need to break his head in the hunt for words, but keeps his best strength for that part of the thought which subtly expresses itself in metre and harmony."⁷ Relative to this point Taylor wrote in another place: "You will see that my object—not only here but throughout—is to reproduce measure and rhyme, and also the rhythmical *tone* or *stimmung* of the original. My only charge against Mr. Brooks is that he neglects the latter quality, which is something apart from the mere scansion."⁸

3. "The first draft of the work requires warmth; the revision, coolness."⁹

4. It takes a poet to reproduce a poet. Taylor, in commenting on Lord Derby's translation of Homer, says: "... he has missed those subtle graces, those fortunate strokes of expression, which only a poet can adequately recognize and only a poet can reproduce."¹⁰ Elsewhere he speaks of "the gulf . . . which always opens between the best results of Labor and Taste, and the achievements of that gift which is born and never to be acquired."¹¹

⁵ Cf. *Faust*, I, pref., p. iv.

⁶ Cf. *Essays and Notes*, p. 274.

⁷ Cf. *Life and Letters*, v. II, p. 506.

⁸ Cf. *Life and Letters*, v. II, p. 520.

⁹ Cf. *Life and Letters*, v. II, p. 507.

¹⁰ Cf. *Essays and Notes*, p. 261.

¹¹ Cf. *Essays and Notes*, p. 268. Critics on the whole seem to agree with Taylor that it takes a poet to translate a poet. It is of interest therefore to record the opinion of two who are of contrary mind. Cf. Dr. Gustav Weck, *Prinzipien der Übersetzungskunst*, p. 6; "Congenialität der Naturen ist das Wünschenswerthe; das Geringste, dass der Über-

5. "With regard to metrical form, we presume no one will deny that that of the author must be chosen, where the translator's language will admit of it without too great a sacrifice."¹²

6. "The labor of translation" must be "effectually concealed."¹³

7. Taylor approves "... purity of diction, the balance and harmony of rhythm, variety of movement, and that native poetic instinct which combines the simple and the picturesque, the bare prosaic fact and its dignified expression."¹⁴

8. The original must be rendered in words which are not alone literal but also equivalent. Taylor says of Brooks's "Faust": "The care and conscience with which the work had been performed were so apparent, that I now state with reluctance what then seemed to me to be its only deficiencies—a lack of the lyrical fire and fluency of the original in some passages, and an occasional lowering of the tone through the use of words which are literal, but not equivalent."¹⁵

9. The translator's "task is not simply mechanical; he must feel, and be guided by, a secondary inspiration. Surrendering himself to the full possession of the spirit which shall speak through him, he receives, also, a portion of the same creative power."¹⁶

setzer selbst ein Stück Poet sei." Cf. also Dr. Johannes Ehlers, *Worin besteht die Uebersetzungskunst?* p. 7 f.: "Kein Uebersetzer bedarf des schöpferischen Talentes für das, was er nachzubilden beginnt, aber tiefere Kunde davon muss er besitzen. So braucht der Uebersetzer des Dichters keiner dichterischen Begabung, wohl aber des Bewusstseins für das Dichterische, der vernunftmässigen Erkenntniss von der Art der Dichtkunst. Wäre er ein Dichter, so würde er zur eigentlichen Uebersetzungskunst weniger berufen sein, würde sich mehr zur freien getrieben fühlen, die zwar auch noch nicht die Gabe des ursprünglichen Schaffens voraussetzt, aber doch der Einbildungskraft mehr Raum gestattet, da sie nur das Gesetzbuch der Darstellungskunst anerkennt und darauf verzichtet den Anforderungen der Sprachwissenschaft zu genügen. Die Erfahrung lehrt, dass schöpferisch weniger Begabte sich vorzüglich und mit dem besten Erfolge der Kunst des Nachbildens weihen; die Römer begannen damit ihre Litteratur, sie waren kein sehr erfindsames Volk; und die Leistungen eines Schlegel in dieser Richtung verehren wir weit höher als was er selbstschaffend hervorgebracht."

¹² Cf. *Essays and Notes*, p. 261.

¹³ Cf. *Essays and Notes*, p. 271.

¹⁴ Cf. *Essays and Notes*, p. 274 f.

¹⁵ Cf. *Faust*, I, pref., p. iv.

¹⁶ Cf. *Faust*, I, pref., p. viii.

Up to this point there is nothing new or startling in Taylor's views concerning translation; but in his prefaces to "Faust" he becomes more radical, indeed, he grows almost polemical, when he comes to make a plea for the principle of translation which lay nearest his heart, when he insists upon a lineal,¹⁷ literal, rime and rhythm preserving reproduction of the poetic original. He maintains that there are "few difficulties in the way of a nearly literal yet thoroughly rhythmical version of *Faust*."¹⁸ That the public accepts at all "the cheaper substitute,"¹⁹ a prose translation of a poetical work, proves nothing but that the "qualities of the original work . . . cannot be destroyed by a test so violent."²⁰ Even meters selected arbitrarily by the translator are not to be endured. "The white light of Goethe's thought" is "thereby passed through the tinted glass of other minds, and" assumes "the coloring of each."²¹ To which one is tempted to reply that such is the case in any version whatsoever; the white light of Goethe's

¹⁷ Cf. unpublished letter to Professor J. M. Hart, dated March 10, 1871: "I have aimed less at exact *verbal* translation, than at giving the character and spirit of the *lines*."

¹⁸ Cf. *Faust*, I, pref., p. iv.

¹⁹ Cf. *Faust*, I, pref., p. xii.

²⁰ Cf. *Faust*, I, pref., p. xi.

²¹ Cf. *Faust*, I, pref., p. iv. Taylor quotes (*Faust*, I, pref., p. v f.) several passages from Goethe in support of his contention for a metrical version of *Faust*. Over against these may be set a paragraph from the Eleventh Book of the Third Part of *Dichtung und Wahrheit*: "Ich ehre den Rhythmus wie den Reim, wodurch Poesie erst zur Poesie wird, aber das eigentlich tief und gründlich Wirksame, das wahrhaft Ausbildende und Fördernde ist dasjenige, was vom Dichter übrig bleibt, wenn er in Prosa übersetzt wird. Dann bleibt der reine vollkommene Gehalt, den uns ein blendendes Aeussere oft, wenn er fehlt, vorzuspiegeln weiss und, wenn er gegenwärtig ist, verdeckt. . . . Nur will ich noch, zu Gunsten meines Vorschlages, an Luthers Bibelübersetzung erinnern: denn dass dieser treffliche Mann ein in dem verschiedensten Stile verfasstes Werk und dessen dichterischen, geschichtlichen, gebietenden, lehrenden Ton uns in der Muttersprache wie aus einem Gusse überlieferte, hat die Religion mehr gefördert, als wenn er die Eigentümlichkeiten des Originals im einzelnen hätte nachbilden wollen. Vergebens hat man nachher sich mit dem Buche Hiob, den Psalmen, und anderen Gesängen bemüht, sie uns in ihrer poetischen Form geniessbar zu machen. Für die Menge, auf die gewirkt werden soll, bleibt eine schlichte Uebertragung immer die beste. Jene kritischen Uebersetzungen, die mit dem Original wetteifern, dienen eigentlich nur zur Unterhaltung der Gelehrten unter einander."

thought still passes through the tinted glass of other minds; that is inevitably the nature of translation.

Taylor insists with such excess of warmth upon the reproduction of the original rimes and meters, he is so complacently satisfied that he has "very nearly" achieved "a rigid, unyielding adherence to every foot, line, and rhyme of the German original";²² and he assumes an attitude of such tolerant superiority toward those persons who had done "Faust" into prose or into arbitrary meters that he might readily appear to believe that he had found in fidelity to form a panacea for all the ills of translating; a complete formula for the perfect transference of literature from one language to another. At any rate Taylor, by reason of his prefaces, seemed to many critics to imagine that poetry resides exclusively in form, and that consequently he who caught the form, caught the poetry too. To these critics fidelity to form was Taylor's fetish; to them his pronouncements were little short of a challenge.

One of these critics, writing in the *Nation*, shall speak for himself. He says: "Mr. Taylor's translation of the 'Faust' is prefaced by a plea for a version which shall retain the 'form,' of the original. This 'form' consists in the metres and rhymes, he would seem to say, and a version which follows the metres of the original as closely as the relation between the English language and the German allows, will, he thinks, be a far better rendering of the poem than any literal version can be. He would seem to hold that a literal version is *ipso facto* prosaic, and that a metrical version is very likely, in virtue of its metres merely, to be a more poetical version than any version in prose. He is even at pains to talk at some considerable length of the conservatism of our literary standards, and of the underrated resources of English poetry in the matter of dactyls, and so on; as if dactyls and iambs and trochees and all the rest of them had not figured for generations in English literature, and in text-books that teach the art of English composition to boys and girls at school. No one would think of denying

²² Cf. *Faust*, I, pref., p. xv.

what Mr. Taylor is strenuous to assert—the necessary connection of rhythm with poetry; but there are always multitudes of people who, asserting this, and having no understanding of its meaning, afford proof the most conclusive that to any rhythms or rhymes, however elaborate, it is poetry alone that can give the least value. ‘If you are literal in translating,’ Mr. Taylor would say, ‘the “form” vanishes, and “no one familiar with rhythmical expression through the needs of his own nature” will say that the form of a poem is of secondary importance.’ To this the reply of the literalists would be, that the ‘form’ of a poem cannot be said to reside in its metres, but may with far more truth be said to reside in such choice and such presentation of certain truths of nature and life as shall make them beautifully affecting, and so, instructive while delightful. The objection, they would say, to trying to give the superficial form is that the difference in languages is such that you cannot at once make with two of them the same music and express the same thoughts; and the temptation is to sacrifice the thought to the music, while the best result of the attempt, except in some lucky instances of very rare occurrence, is to make the thought concede a little to the music, and the music a little to the thought, so that definiteness of meaning is sure to lose something, is likely to lose much, and so also are the sweetness and vagueness of suggestion sure to vanish away. However, we did not intend to be led into any discussion of a question so long mooted and so incapable of settlement as we have already admitted the question of the best theory of translation to be. In the particular case of Mr. Taylor, the comparatively new phase of the controversy which he represents we thought it worth while to note. That a foreign poet should be so brought over to us that we may regard him as our own; that the translator should give us poetical equivalents rather than require us to transport ourselves over to the foreign poet and adopt his situation; but that the translator should as often as possible give us precisely the same thing that the foreign poet gives his native auditors, and not put us off with an English equivalent for the German or Italian

or French original—this is one of the several accustomed views of the translator's duty and as such may well be allowed to pass without more of fruitless challenging and colloquy. Not so, however, as we think, with Mr. Taylor's variation of the general term. This, it seems to us, it will be well for many of us to consider carefully. To us, ourselves, it seems to lay inordinate stress upon the mechanics of poetry, and to be capable of doing harm. To get men of our race and time to think enough about 'form' is no doubt very difficult, and to accomplish it would, no doubt, be very well. But to let ourselves be bedevilled by intricacies of construction and then talk about 'art' as some of us do, is as much like caring for 'form' as cutting a tree into wooden Nuremberg toys is like saving it alive and working with spade and pruning knife in assistance of the elemental forces which shape it in accordance with the natural law of its growth."²³

It can be shown, however, I believe, that Taylor himself did not imagine that fidelity to form provided an infallible solution for all the problems of translation, or that form is poetry, or that he who catches the form catches the poetry with it. If we forsake the pretentious and apparently unduly dogmatic prefaces for more obscure corners of Taylor's "*Faust*," we shall find that he makes concessions which seriously modify his theory of translation; so much so, that Taylor too, whose confident prefaces had promised much, is found in the event to leave us without any hard and fast formula whereby the flawless translation may be unerringly obtained. To begin with, he admits, albeit with an amusing air of wonderment shining through his words, that the atmosphere, nay, even the movement of a given passage may be reproduced where the original meter has been ignored. He says: "Shelley translates the couplet with great spirit:

'The giant-snouted crags, ho! ho!
How they snort and how they blow!'

His version of the Walpurgis-Night, although not very faithful, and containing frequent lines of his own interpolation,

²³ Cf. *Nation*, March 23, 1871, p. 201 f.

nevertheless admirably reproduces the hurrying movement and the weird atmosphere of the original. This is the more remarkable since he disregards, for the most part, the German metres."²⁴

Secondly, he quotes, if not with approval at any rate without dissent, a passage from Düntzer and a xenion which expressly state that all things poetical are not achieved by meter and rime, that is, by form alone.²⁵

And thirdly, he grants that he is on occasion unable to apply his lineal, literal, rime and rhythm preserving formula; or having applied it, the result somehow fell short of what might be considered a good translation. He is unable, he says, to apply his theory in the case of the line:

Es irrt der Mensch so lang er strebt.²⁶

Far from reproducing it, "in English without the slightest change of meaning, measure, or rhyme"²⁷ he finds it "impossible to give the full meaning of these words . . . in a single line."²⁸ He is further unable to apply his theory in the case of the lines:

FAUST
Schlange! Schlange!
MEPHISTOPHELES FÜR SICH
Gelt! dass ich dich fange!²⁹

Taylor says: "In this exclamation, and in the *aside* of Mephistopheles, I have omitted the rhyme of the original, which could not possibly be reproduced without losing the subtle suggest-

²⁴ Cf. *Faust*, I, Notes, p. 306, note 130.

²⁵ Cf. *Faust*, I, Notes, p. 319, note 155: "Goethe undoubtedly herewith designates those botching poetasters, who, without the slightest idea that every living poem must flow spontaneously from within as an organic whole, miserably tack and stitch rhymes together, and thus produce malformations which they attempt to pass off as creations of beauty." Düntzer.

"Everything in this poem is perfect, thought and expression, Rhythm: but one thing it lacks; 'tis not a poem at all."

²⁶ Cf. I. 317.

²⁷ Cf. *Faust*, I, pref., p. xiv.

²⁸ Cf. *Faust*, I, Notes, p. 228, note 11.

²⁹ Cf. II. 3324-3325.

iveness of the words."³⁰ In the "König in Thule" Taylor is once more unable to be quite faithful to form,³¹ and yet that lyric was perverse enough to turn out the best thing in Taylor's whole translation.

There are still other places, not specified in the notes, where Taylor has failed to remain accurately within the limits prescribed by his original. Thus in the song of the Geister,³² the original text shows fifty-nine lines, while Taylor has sixty. The superfluous line is:

Circling the islands. (I, 60)

The speech of the Kater (ll. 2402-2415) contains in the original fourteen lines, of which Taylor makes fifteen. His extra line is:

And drop, quiescent. (I, 103)

Margaret's speech (ll. 4453-4459) contains in the original seven lines, of which Taylor makes eight. His extra line is:

His prey to discover. (I, 209)

Chiron's speech (ll. 7399-7405) has in the original seven lines, of which Taylor makes eight. The extra line is:

And irresistibly she smiteth. (II, 119)

The speech of the Pygmäen-Älteste (ll. 7626-7643) contains in the original eighteen lines, of which Taylor makes nineteen. The extra line is:

Working victorious. (II, 128)

The speech of the Generalissimus (ll. 7644-7653) contains in

³⁰ Cf. *Faust*, I, Notes, p. 292, note 110.

³¹ Cf. *Faust*, I, pref., p. xv: "The single slight liberty I have taken with the lyrical passages is in Margaret's song,—'The King of Thule,'—in which, by omitting the alternate feminine rhymes, yet retaining the metre, I was enabled to make the translation strictly literal." Cf. also *Faust*, I, Notes, p. 287, note 99: "As I have stated in the Preface, the feminine rhymes of the first and third lines of each verse have been omitted, in order to make the translation strictly literal. . . . In this instance I have considered it especially necessary to preserve the simplicity of the original, and (if that be possible) the weird, mystic sweetness of its movement."

³² Cf. ll. 1447-1505.

the original ten lines, of which Taylor makes eleven. The extra line is:

Shoot and bring low. (II, 129)

The speech of the Imsen and Daktyl (ll. 7654-7659) contains in the original six lines, of which Taylor makes seven. The extra line is:

Were now defiant. (II, 129)

The speech of the Nereiden and Tritonen (ll. 8044-8057) contains in the original fourteen lines, of which Taylor makes fifteen. The extra line is:

Chains and jewels hung around us. (II, 145)

The speech of Faust (ll. 10155-10159) contains in the original five lines, of which Taylor makes six. The extra line is:

Yet one has only, when all's said. (II, 232)

There remain one or two other instances where Taylor concedes that he has not been altogether faithful to the form of his original. He says: "In this first chorus I have been forced by the prime necessity of preserving the meaning, to leave the second line unrhymed."³³ "In order to retain the rhyme, I have been obliged to express a little more prominently the idea of 'Inasmuch as ye have done it unto the least of one of these my brethren, ye have done it unto me,'—which is implied in the original."³⁴ "In the original, the first of these names is given as *Fliegengott*, Fly-god. For the sake of metre, I have substituted our familiar Hebrew equivalent, Beelzebub—or, more correctly, *Baalsebab*."³⁵ "In the first verse (*i. e.*, of "Meine Ruh' ist hin"), which is twice repeated as a refrain, I have been obliged to choose between the repetition of the word *peace* in the third line and the use of a pronoun which cannot, as in the German, fix its antecedent by its gender."³⁶ "The spirit of this Chorus is clear, in the original, but not the language. Even a literal translation is impossible unless we supply, conjecturally, the singular ellipses of the German

³³ Cf. *Faust*, I, Notes, p. 239 f., note 32.

³⁴ Cf. *Faust*, I, Notes, p. 241, note 34.

³⁵ Cf. *Faust*, I, Notes, p. 254 f., note 52.

³⁶ Cf. *Faust*, I, Notes, p. 294, note 113.

lines."³⁷ "Every line is here (*i. e.*, in the verses "Gerettet ist das edle Glied") so pregnant with important meaning that an exact rhymed translation becomes nearly impossible, and I therefore add the verse in prose."³⁸

In the last line of Faust's opening speech in the Kerker-scene, Taylor (in his first edition of 1871, and in all reprints of that edition) deliberately avoided the unusual transitive force of *zögern* and translated:

On! my shrinking only brings Death more near.

("Faust," ed. 1871, I, p. 292.)

In one of his notes ("Faust," ed. 1871, I, p. 387) he said: "The last line of Faust's soliloquy at the door: '*Fort! Dein Zagen zögert den Tod heran!*' is one of those paradoxical sentences, the meaning of which it is more easy to feel than to reproduce. *Zögern*, like its English equivalent, is an intransitive verb; but Goethe's forcible use of it seems more natural than Hayward's use of the English verb,—'On! Thy irresolution *lingers* death hitherwards!' This is strictly literal; yet Mr. Brooks's translation—'On! Thy shrinking slowly hastens the blow!' is preferable." Later Taylor changed his mind. In the Kennett edition of his "Faust" (from 1875 on) the line reads:

On! my shrinking but lingers Death more near. (I, 207)

³⁷ Cf. *Faust*, II, Notes, p. 435 f., note 176. Even a latter-day German critic is tried, like Taylor, by the diction of Goethe's little excursus in the field of mysticism. Cf. *Goethe. Sein Leben und seine Werke*, by Dr. Albert Bielschowsky, v. 2, p. 669, where Professor Theobald Ziegler of Strassburg says: "Mit dieser Neigung zum Allegorisieren hängt dann aber auch die Sprache dieses zweiten Teiles zusammen . . . die Sprache hat etwas Gespreiztes und Geschnörkeltes, der vielberufene 'Altersstil' Goethes macht sich wirklich spürbar . . . man höre bei der Grablegung Fausts im fünften Akt den Chor der Rosen streuenden Engel:

Rosen, ihr blendenden . . .
Den Ruhenden hin.

Ist das noch einfach, ist das noch schön? Man wendet noch ein, über den Geschmack sei nicht zu streiten. Gut! Aber dann liesse sich vielleicht so sagen: Wer den Stil des ersten Teiles für schön hält, dem kann dieser grossartige und oft recht krause Stil des zweiten Teiles nicht gefallen."

³⁸ Cf. *Faust*, II, p. 459.

The note was then altered to: "The last line of Faust's soliloquy at the door: '*Fort! Dein Zagen zögert den Tod heran!*' is one of those paradoxical sentences, the meaning of which it is more easy to feel than to reproduce. *Zögern*, like its English equivalent, is an intransitive verb; but Shakespeare's example may justify me in using the verb *to linger*, with an object, as Goethe uses *zögern*. The former expression is the literal reproduction of the latter."³⁹

It seems probable that Taylor made the change at Mr. Macdonough's suggestion, although he gives Mr. Macdonough no credit for it. In a review of Taylor's translation, which appeared in the *New York World*, Mr. Macdonough had written: "The English version seems to us to miss here the neatest and closest phrase (the same indeed which Hayward adopts), by refusing the expressive word 'linger' with a transitive force—a force unusual, it is true, but supported by the highest authority. 'Midsummer-Night's Dream' gives us: 'How slow this old moon wanes! She lingers my desires.' The chorus leading in the second act of 'Henry the Fifth' bids the auditors 'linger your patience'; and the last scene of 'Troilus and Cressida' presents a couplet involving the very same idea and form with 'Faust's': 'Let your brief plagues be mercy, And linger not our sure destructions on.'"⁴⁰

It is of interest to note further that Taylor departs from his maxim of strict fidelity by omitting several lines of the original text. His first omission is on the whole the most serious. Taylor ignores the stage direction which follows immediately after line 3194 in the German text.⁴¹ This stage direction reads: "Margarete drückt ihm die Hände, macht sich los und läuft weg. Er steht einen Augenblick in Gedanken, dann folgt er ihr." It is important because it is one of three hints which Goethe gives us that Faust hesitated before accomplishing

³⁹ Cf. *Faust*, I, Notes, p. 331, note 173.

⁴⁰ Cf. *New York World*, February 3, 1871.

⁴¹ Mrs. Bayard Taylor writes me in this connection: "The omission of the stage direction on p. 144, ed. of '98, must have been done purposely because the ed. of '70-'71 also omits the same. Why I can't tell, except that it does not come within the scope of a metrical translation.(?)" Taylor did however translate all the remaining stage directions.

Gretchen's ruin. Taylor completely missed the first of these hints as is shown by his incorrect translation of the line:

Fort! Fort! Ich kehre nimmermehr. (l. 2730)

which Taylor strangely renders:

Go! go! I never will retreat. (l. 119)

Therefore it is doubly to be regretted that he should have missed the second of these hints as well.

Taylor omits one of the twenty-two lines in the speech of the Pulcinelli (ll. 5215-5236). The line which remains untranslated seems to be:

Einher zu laufen. (l. 5226)

The speech of Helena (ll. 8524-8559) contains in the original thirty-six lines, of which Taylor makes thirty-five. He leaves untranslated:

Erobert bin ich, ob gefangen weiss ich nicht. (l. 8530)

The speech of Faust (ll. 10212-10233) contains in the original twenty-two lines, of which Taylor makes twenty-one. He leaves untranslated:

Sie mag sich noch so übermüthig regen. (l. 10224)

In his first edition of 1870-1871 Taylor omitted lines 9069-9070:

CHOR

Aber wir?

PHORKYAS

Ihr wisst es deutlich, seht vor Augen ihren Tod,
Merkt den eurigen da drinne; nein, zu helfen ist euch nicht.

These lines were included, however, in the Kennett edition of Taylor's "Faust" from 1875 on. Finally Taylor omits l. 10524:

Er ist behend, reisst alles mit sich fort.

For this last omission it is hardly fair to hold Taylor responsible, since the German edition of "Faust" on which he based his translation omits it also.⁴²

⁴² The German text on which Taylor based his translation is a slender 16mo. volume containing both parts of "Faust," although a careless binder has inscribed *I Theil* on the back of the book. The title page

Once, doubtless when temporarily abandoned by his logical faculty, Taylor justifies violence done perforce to his principle of formal fidelity, by violence done deliberately to that same principle. Thus he says: "If, in two or three instances I have left a line unrhymed, I have balanced the omission by giving rhymes to other lines which stand unrhymed in the original text."⁴³

On the other hand Taylor applies his lineal, literal, rime and rhythm preserving formula and then admits that the result

reads: Faust | Eine Tragödie | von | Goethe | Beide Theile in Einem Bande. | Stuttgart und Augsburg. | J. G. Cotta'scher Verlag | 1856. It may be stated here that the volume contains nothing especially helpful to the student of Taylor's translation. Taylor has drawn (in Part I, not in Part II) short horizontal lines over against such lines of the text as he afterward annotated. On p. 14 he corrects the misprint *Ende* to *Erde*. On p. 16 at the end of the Prolog im Himmel he has written "ten notes." Against the first four lines of the opening monologue (p. 17) he has written "Marlow." At the bottom of page 25 he has written "1st Ed." He has starred the line: Den leichten Tag gesucht und in der Dämm'ung schwer (p. 27), and at the bottom of the page he has written "*lichten (Hartung)." Against the lines:

Falsch Gebild und Wort
Verändern Sinn und Ort!
Seyd hier und dort! (p. 86)

he has written "legend." On p. 167 in the upper right hand margin he has written the numbers "44" and "176." He has drawn a perpendicular line against the lines:

Er ist, wie ich von ihm vernommen,
Gar wundersam nur halb zur Welt gekommen.
Ihm fehlt es nicht an geistigen Eigenschaften,
Doch gar zu sehr am greiflich Tüchtighaften. (p. 319)

He has underlined the words "geistigen" and "greiflich Tüchtighaften," starred the passage and written below "*Goethe." He has written beside the stage direction: "Der Schauplatz verändert sich," p. 367, "III" and at the bottom of the page "Eck II, 193." All Taylor's notes were written with pencil.

⁴³ Cf. *Faust*, I, pref., p. xv. Cf. also review of Taylor's *Faust* in the *Aldine*, March, 1871, "Nor, having once enunciated and accepted the law of careful observance of rhyme, has the author a very good grace in putting forward his excuse, in the preface, that his occasional omission, in the translation, of rhymes where they belonged in the original is counter-balanced by his frequently supplying them where they do not exist. The amateur of Eliana will be apt to recall poor Charles Lamb's stuttering apology when scolded for coming to his desk so late mornings—'But then you see, I always g-g-go away so early afternoons.'"

is not all that it should be. There are still some things without the realm of fidelity the most strict. He says: "The graceful measure of the song (*i. e.*, the Soldatenlied), which nevertheless expresses the roughest realism of German peasant-life, can only be approximately given in another language."⁴⁴ "The rhythmical translation of this song (*i. e.*, the song of the Geister)—which, without the original rhythm and rhyme, would lose nearly all its value—is a head and heart breaking task. I can only say, that after returning to it again and again, during a period of six years, I can offer nothing better."⁴⁵ ". . . the reader may study her (*i. e.*, Gretchen's) character for himself, although an indescribable bloom and freshness is lost in transferring her story to another language."⁴⁶ "I have been obliged, by the exigency of rhyme, to express the latter phrase in different words; yet this is one of those instances where *no* English words, though they may perfectly convey the meaning, can possibly carry with them the fulness and tenderness of sentiment which we feel in the original. '*Ich werde Zeit genug an euch zu denken haben*' suggests in some mysterious way, a contrast between Faust's place in life and Margaret's, between the love of man and that of woman, which the words do not seem to retain when translated."⁴⁷ "They (*i. e.*, the lines of the lyric "*Meine Ruh' ist hin*") are, indeed, articulate sighs; the lines are almost as short and simple as the first speech of a child, and the least deviation from either the meaning or the melody of the original (even the change of *meine* into *my*, in the first line) takes away something of its indescribable sadness and strength of desire."⁴⁸ "If the revery at the spinning-wheel be a sigh of longing, this (*i. e.*, the lyric "*Ach neige*") is a cry for help, equally wonderful in words and metre; yet with a character equally elusive when we attempt to reproduce it in another language."⁴⁹ "The delicate

⁴⁴ Cf. *Faust*, I, Notes, p. 243, note 39.

⁴⁵ Cf. *Faust*, I, Notes, p. 257, note 56.

⁴⁶ Cf. *Faust*, I, Notes, p. 284, note 93.

⁴⁷ Cf. *Faust*, I, Notes, p. 289, note 105.

⁴⁸ Cf. *Faust*, I, Notes, p. 294, note 113.

⁴⁹ Cf. *Faust*, I, Notes, p. 297 f., note 117.

satire of the line, *Doch das Antike find' ich zu lebendig*, is lost in translation."⁵⁰ "The original,

Denn wo Natur im reinen Kreise waltet,
Ergreifen all (*sic*) Welten sich,—

is one of those pregnant expressions which make the translator despair,—for, the more thoroughly he is penetrated with the meaning, the less does it seem possible to express that meaning in any words."⁵¹

It will be observed that the majority of the above quotations are from the First Part. From this it may be inferred that Taylor was able to apply his formula and achieve results with more satisfaction to himself in the Second Part. He declares that this really was the case. "The original metres are more closely reproduced than even in the First Part, for the predominance of symbol and aphorism, in the place of sentiment and passion, has, in this respect, made my task more easy; and there are from beginning to end, less than a score of lines where I have been compelled to take any liberty with either rhythm or rhyme."⁵²

While the enthusiastic prefaces might persuade us that Taylor believed he had established in fidelity to form a canon which should infallibly produce a perfect translation, the quotations just made show clearly that on the one hand he found himself unable at times to apply his theory; and that on the other hand he applied his theory, transferred the form and somehow the poetry was not transferred with it. He could see that himself. Taylor had not, to be sure, that pessimistic attitude as to the futility of translation, which says: "Translation is travesty,"⁵³ "Das Übersetzen ist der Tod des Verständnisses,"⁵⁴ which insists that translation is synonymous with making an ass of the thing translated.⁵⁵ But he did think, I

⁵⁰ Cf. *Faust*, II, Notes, p. 383, note 66.

⁵¹ Cf. *Faust*, II, Notes, p. 424, note 118.

⁵² Cf. *Faust*, II, pref., p. xiv.

⁵³ Cf. *Nation*, v. 12, p. 201.

⁵⁴ Cf. Cauer, *Kunst des Übersetzens*, p. 4.

⁵⁵ Reviewers of Taylor's *Faust* (cf. *Nation*, March 23, 1871, p. 201, and *Harper's Magazine*, March, 1871, p. 623) have a penchant for referring to "Midsummer-Night's Dream," act III, scene 1, where Quince beholds Bottom "with an ass's head," and exclaims: "Bless thee, Bottom! bless thee! thou art translated."

believe, that translation is a thing to be sighed over regretfully, a thing that is cut off by a very considerable interval from the precincts of perfection.

In his Notes Taylor discusses Goethe's composition of "Faust" II, act II, scenes 1-2, and says: "He (*i. e.*, Goethe) translates his thoughts from the natural language of Age into that of Youth, and as in all translation, he is not quite equal to the original."⁵⁶ And in one of his letters Taylor wrote: "It would be impossible for me to translate my own German proem, because it was conceived in German. I could only give the same thought, in English—although *my own*—in paler colors."⁵⁷ As between translating that which one has conceived oneself in a foreign tongue, and that which some other person has conceived in that tongue, it appears that such advantage as there may be, must lie on the side of the former. Hence, I deduce that Taylor believed translation to be at best a reproduction in "paler colors."

Upon his own achievement in translating "Faust" Taylor placed in certain private letters a more modest estimate than he does in either of his prefaces. On one occasion he wrote: "I freely admit that *nothing* in it (*i. e.*, Taylor's translation of "Faust") equals the original, and that there is no passage where some of the *German* bloom is not lost in the English words."⁵⁸

Thus we have seen that Taylor in his prefaces is led away by his enthusiasm to state in terms too exclusive, too dogmatic, his theory of formal fidelity. His statements, I believe, appear more categorical than he intended they should. Beyond this error in judgment, Taylor is, in his prefaces, twice guilty of fallacy by implication. In his effort to show "that there is no sufficient excuse for an unmetrical translation of *Faust*"⁵⁹ Taylor tells us that the Germans have made some extraordinarily fine translations of English poems. He is even at

⁵⁶ Cf. *Faust*, II, Notes, p. 364, note 53.

⁵⁷ Extract from a letter to Professor James Morgan Hart, quoted by A. H. Smyth in *Bayard Taylor*, p. 187.

⁵⁸ Extract from an unpublished letter to Professor James Morgan Hart, dated February 19, 1871.

⁵⁹ Cf. *Faust*, I, pref., p. ix.

pains to quote several very excellent specimens. The implication is, the Germans are uncommonly successful in making translations from the English, therefore the English are (or at any rate ought to be) uncommonly successful in making translations from the German. The implication is fallacious. It is contrary to fact.

Five years before Taylor published his "Faust," the actual state of the case was succinctly set forth by an English reviewer, who said: "A translator of German deals with metres and with verbal roots which are common to both languages, and a sanguine beginner in the art at first thinks it possible to preserve both sound and the sense of the cognate original. There are English and Scotch ballads which may be found almost unchanged in several Low-German dialects, and modern German translations of Shakspeare display a photographic fidelity to the text, although much of the spirit unavoidably evaporates. The converse process of turning German verse into English is far more difficult."⁶⁰

Before considering why the converse process is far more difficult, we will state the second fallacy by implication to be discovered in Taylor's preface. Taylor says: "The difficulties in the way of a nearly literal translation of *Faust* in the original metres have been exaggerated, because certain affinities between the two languages have not been properly considered."⁶¹ In "Faust" especially there is "a mutual approach of the two languages . . . many lines of *Faust* may be repeated in English without the slightest change of meaning, measure or rhyme. . . . The flow of Goethe's verse is sometimes so similar to that of the corresponding English metre, that not only its harmonies and caesural pauses, but even its punctuation, may be easily retained."⁶² A list is even drawn up of the variety of ways in which the English tongue leaps to meet her Teutonic sister.⁶³ The inference which Taylor would have us draw is this: the German (in par-

⁶⁰ Cf. *Saturday Review*, v. 19, p. 478, review of Sir Theodore Martin's *Faust*.

⁶¹ Cf. *Faust*, I, pref., p. xii f.

⁶² Cf. *Faust*, I, pref., p. xiv.

⁶³ Cf. *Faust*, I, pref., p. xiv.

ticular the German of "Faust") is structurally and in vocabulary astonishingly like the English. It is of course amiable in Taylor to insist so eloquently upon this point, for the better he proves it, the more he lessens his own desert. But the facts of the case are against him.⁶⁴

The first fact is this: "So large is the number of foreign words in English, that from a certain point of view it might at first be supposed our language had lost its Teutonic character. If, for example, we compute the foreign element in one of our English dictionaries, it will be found to be far in excess of the number of native words."⁶⁵ "As to this tendency to borrow and use foreign words, however, nations have radically differed. Some have with freedom adopted words from all languages with which there has been the slightest contact. The conservatism of others has withstood the incorporation of any considerable loan element even from the most friendly nation. The first class has one of its most striking examples in English, while to the second class belongs modern German."⁶⁶

⁶⁴ Cf. *Athenaeum*, no. 2284, p. 171: "Of the resources of our language for translation of German verse, Mr. Taylor has a very high estimate. He finds it as easy to refer to examples of facility as we find it to give proofs of difficulty." Cf. also *Saturday Review*, September 16, 1871, p. 370: "We think that Mr. Taylor, in opposing in his preface the views of Mr. Lewes, unduly underrates the organic differences of the two languages, as well as the limit set to all endeavours to transplant a great poem from any one tongue to another. Not to speak of the characteristic differences of accent . . . the German possesses, in the abundance of its full sustained vowels, with their vigorous consonantal supports, a depth of music which can never be exactly reproduced in the lighter tones of English." Cf. also review of Taylor's *Faust* in the *Gegenwart*: "Zuvörderst hat es den Anschein als ob Taylor, indem er den Leweschen Ansichten entgegentritt, die organische Verschiedenheit der beiden Sprachen zu sehr unterschätzt, und die Grenzen nicht erkennt, die naturgemäss allen Uebersetzungen grösserer Dichtungen aus einer Sprache in eine andere gezogen sind. Nicht minder verliert er bei seinen Reimen die Unbiegsamkeit, Härte, und das Unmelodische der englischen Sprache und den weichen Wohlklang, die Biegsamkeit und Vieldeutigkeit der deutschen aus den Augen." This German reviewer had very obviously studied his *Saturday Review*.

⁶⁵ Cf. O. F. Emerson, *History of the English Language*, New York, 1897, p. 125.

⁶⁶ Cf. *ibid.*, p. 121 f. Cf. *The Making of English*, by Henry Bradley, New York, 1904, p. 6 f. Mr. Bradley lays emphasis upon the difference between the English and the German vocabulary.

The second fact is this: "Our Modern English is called an analytic, or uninflected tongue. That is, present English does not rely on inflectional forms for expressing the various relations existing between nouns, adjectives, pronouns, and verbs."⁶⁷ Out of these two stubborn facts arise for the translator from German into English two (to my mind almost insuperable) obstacles to an adequate translation. Bayard Taylor at any rate has succeeded in clearing neither of these obstacles.

Out of the fact that English is strongly tintured with a Romance element, grows the "Latinization" of "Faust," as one of the critics (Mr. W. P. Andrews) is pleased to call it. Thus Mr. Andrews finds the line:

The joy (*sic*) which touched the verge of pain⁶⁸
a very sophisticated rendering for Goethe's:

Das tiefe schmerzenvolle Glück⁶⁹

although he thinks it "one of the least marked variations in this direction—a straw which shows the way of the wind."⁷⁰ Mr. Andrews continues: "Both Mr. Taylor and his forerunner, Mr. Brooks,—to whom he owes an unacknowledged debt,—insist on the importance of preserving the metres of the original. Mr. Taylor has even called attention to the change of musical atmosphere with the entrance of Margaret upon the scene. . . . Mr. Taylor and Mr. Brooks seem, however, to have been led somewhat astray by their notion that this atmosphere was the result of Goethe's constant use of the feminine rhyme, whereas the distinguishing feature of Goethe's verse is the entire absence of any of the Latinized and inverted phrases common to ordinary literature, and the absolute directness and simplicity of his Teutonic speech. The verse sings in all keys, but the characters speak as directly and simply as if they had never heard of a book. . . . From beginning to end of this great poem of 12,110 lines of nearly

⁶⁷ Cf. *ibid.*, p. 278.

⁶⁸ Cf. *Faust*, I, p. 8; Taylor wrote: "The bliss that touched the verge of pain."

⁶⁹ Cf. l. 195.

⁷⁰ Cf. *Atlantic*, v. 66, p. 733.

every known metre, we have hardly one Latinized word, and not a single poetical trope or purely literary expression. This being so, it is clear that Faust cannot be adequately represented by the constant use of Latinized words and literary phrases."⁷¹

Mr. Andrews seems to be of the opinion that Brooks and Taylor and other translators might have avoided this "Latinization," if they but had the wit to do so. I do not agree with him. It belongs, I think, to the genius of the language. But I am very willing to admit that it is disastrous often to the proper rendering of "Faust." We can imagine Bayard Taylor's Margaret, with a fine rolling of r's and all the pomp of an unwonted three syllables, pronounce the word "ab-horréd."⁷² It is highly melodramatic. But it is not Goethe. It is not Gretchen. And nothing remains of Gretchen in the transition from:

Wo ist dein Lieben
Geblieben?⁷³

to

How changed in fashion
Thy passion.⁷⁴

The passage:

Ach, dass die Einfalt, dass die Unschuld nie
Sich selbst und ihren heil'gen Werth erkennt!
Dass Demuth, Niedrigkeit, die höchsten Gaben
Der liebevoll austheilenden Natur—⁷⁵

which Taylor renders:

Ah, that simplicity and innocence ne'er know
Themselves, their holy value, and their spell!
That meekness, lowliness, the highest graces
Which Nature portions out so lovingly— (I, 139)

is ruined by that one word "value," although "simplicity," "innocence," "the highest graces," "portions," and the of-

⁷¹ Cf. *Atlantic*, v. 66, p. 733.

⁷² Cf. *Faust*, I, 159.

⁷³ Cf. II. 4495-4496.

⁷⁴ Cf. *Faust*, I, p. 211.

⁷⁵ Cf. II. 3102-3105.

fensively literary "ne'er" undoubtedly contribute their share to the general unsatisfactory effect. Similarly the stanza,

His lofty gait,
His noble size,
The smile of his mouth,
The power of his eyes, (I, 155)

is robbed of all its charm by that odious word "size." A single verse of eight lines, otherwise rather well translated, which in the original shows but one word ("Brudersphären") in part of foreign derivation, has in Taylor's rendering the following words of Latin descent: "orb," "emulation," "ancient," "predestined," "creation," "visage," "splendid," "power," "uncomprehended." (I, 11.)

And if we turn at random to the other extremity of the volume we find another verse of eight lines, again containing in the original one non-German substantive (Äther). But out of that one, in Taylor's version, have grown twelve. They are "insensibly," "pure," "eternal," "orders," "Presence," "spirits," "sustentation," "ether," "eternal," "Revelation," "Beatitude," "ascending." (II, 308.) These, in the spirit of Matthew Arnold, I should call "bad words."⁷⁶ They are too sophisticated. They detract from the simple Teutonic sublimity of the original. But I am not sure that we could much improve on them and still use the English language.

Out of the second fact, that our language is analytic and uninflected grows the greater of the two obstacles to an adequate translation from the German into the English. The English reviewer, whom I have already quoted, says well upon this point: "The converse process of turning German verse into English is far more difficult, in consequence of the inevitable deficiency of terminal syllables. Poetry, like prose, may sometimes be improved by condensation, and it inevitably loses by artificial expansion. While the German translator, adhering to the metre of the original, has always two or three

⁷⁶ Cf. M. Arnold, *On Translating Homer*, Last Words, p. 248: "Again, because I said that *eld*, *lief*, and other words, are, as Mr. Newman uses them in certain places, bad words, he imagines that I must mean to stamp these words with an absolute reprobation."

syllables in a line to spare, his English competitor must contrive to fill up as many vacant spaces. If the language of Chaucer could have been kept alive for purposes of translation, many vowels which are now mute would still be sounded, and it would often be unnecessary to alter or to transpose the corresponding German word. The same difficulty which besets a translator of *Faust* interferes with attempts to modernize old English verse. Such a couplet as

Up sprengen speres twenty foot on hight;
Out goen swerdes as the silver bright;

might be transposed with less change into German than into the clipped English of the present day. *Schwerter* and *Speere* would be far more manageable than *swords* and *spears*.”⁷⁷ All this is extremely well said. Two lines of it will even endure repeating. “Poetry, like prose, may sometimes be improved by condensation, and it inevitably loses by artificial expansion.”

The discrepancy in the number of syllables between inflecting German and non-inflecting English drives the translator from German into English to padding. It drove Bayard Taylor to padding. And as has been cleverly said: “The indulgence of this obstetric art in the case of so finished a poet (*i. e.*, as Goethe) is hazardous.”⁷⁸ It is Taylor’s solicitude for rhythm and rime, sometimes for both, that impels him to his “fatal habit of impoverishing by seeking to enrich.”⁷⁹ At times he seeks relief in vacuous epithets and impotent adverbs:

⁷⁷ Cf. *Saturday Review*, v. 19, p. 478, review of Sir Theodore Martin’s *Faust*. Cf. *Anzeiger für deutsches Altertum und deutsche Litteratur*, 1898, p. 214, review of McLintock’s *Faust* by Albert Köster: “wer Shakespeare oder Byron vers für vers ins deutsche übertragen will, empfindet oft die schwierigkeit, den ganzen inhalt und jede nuance eines englischen satzes mit einer ebenso geringen anzahl von silben wiederzugeben. umgekehrt, wenn der Engländer eine deutsche dichtung versgetreu übersetzt. da ermöglicht es ihm seine einsilbige sprache sehr häufig, einen gedanken auf der hälfte des raumes zum ausdruck zu bringen, den der Deutsche braucht. und weil nun die ausdehnung jedes verses vorgeschrieben ist, so stellen sich flickwörter oder noch störendere zutaten wie von selbst ein.”

⁷⁸ Cf. *Saturday Review*, September 16, 1871, p. 370.

⁷⁹ Cf. *ibid.*

How ill it suits the Artist, <i>proud</i> and true.	(I, 5)
And when your hands unroll some parchment <i>rare</i> and <i>old</i> .	(I, 45)
This first line let me weigh <i>completely</i> .	(I, 50)
And come, devoted and <i>sincere</i> .	(I, 75)
Like eating and drinking, free and <i>strong</i> .	(I, 77)
And, if we're light, we'll travel swift and <i>clear</i> .	(I, 83)
And fill thy goblet full and <i>free</i> .	(I, 109)
The tender bosom <i>filled</i> and <i>fair</i> .	(I, 118)
How this pure soul, of faith so <i>lowly</i> ,	
So loving and <i>ineffable</i> .	(I, 161)
Sweet pain of love, bind thou with fetters <i>fleet</i> .	(I, 117) ⁸⁰
His tones are <i>sweet</i> and <i>rare</i> ones.	(I, 196)
But tell me why, in days so <i>fair</i> .	(II, 10)
That we win your praises <i>tender</i> .	(II, 22)
We are fair to see and <i>blooming</i> .	(II, 22)
Yet we hope to please you <i>purely</i> .	(II, 23)
Promise <i>sweet</i> , and yielding <i>tender</i> .	(II, 24)
Life we bless with graces <i>living</i> .	(II, 30)
And in days serene and <i>spacious</i> .	(II, 30)
Thy wand thereto is fit and <i>free</i> .	(II, 46)
For, ever foremost, crowd the women <i>greatly</i> .	(II, 47)
Whate'er once was, there burns and brightens <i>free</i> .	(II, 76)
With arm grown strong he lifts her high and <i>free</i> .	(II, 82)
I sought for hidden treasures, <i>grand</i> and golden.	(II, 91)
This is Youth's noblest calling and <i>most fit</i> .	(II, 93)
How strangely am I moved, how <i>nearly</i> .	(II, 115)
O'er the waters, <i>wild</i> and <i>free</i> .	(II, 145)
Not distant are we from his cavern <i>cold</i> .	(II, 147)
At once my wrath is kindled, <i>keen</i> and <i>clear</i> .	(II, 147)
Blent with the element so <i>freely</i> , <i>brightly</i> .	(II, 149)
In one's own day to be true man and <i>great</i> .	(II, 157)
I cannot grant the boon <i>enraptured</i> .	(II, 160)
Spell in lovers' primers <i>sweetly</i> !	
Probe and dally, cosset <i>featly</i> .	(II, 201)
Victory— <i>word divine</i> .	(II, 218)
Then for the fairest women, <i>fresh</i> and <i>rosy</i> .	(II, 233)

⁸⁰ Cf. *Saturday Review*, September 16, 1871, p. 370: "The introduction, too, of the word 'fleet' in this passage is another instance of Mr. Taylor's fatal habit of impoverishing by seeking to enrich."

Stormed through my life at first 't was grand, *completely*.
(II, 289)

With star-crown *tender*.
(II, 310)

Again Taylor takes refuge in comparatives which do not exist in the original, that he may piece out his line. Thus Goethe writes:

Mit brauner Fluth erfüllt er deine Höhle. (I. 733)

Taylor translates:

It fills with browner flood thy crystal hollow. (I, 30)

Goethe writes:

Er scheint ihr gewogen. (I. 3203)

Taylor translates:

He seems of her still fonder. (I, 145)

Goethe writes:

Denn von den Teufeln kann ich ja
Auf gute Geister schliessen. (II. 4357-4358)

Taylor translates:

Since from the devils I also may
Infer the better spirits. (I, 201)

Goethe writes:

Das neues Leben sich aus Leben schafft. (I. 6779)

Taylor translates:

And newer life from its own life creates. (II, 92)

Goethe writes:

Heil! Heil! auf's neue! (I. 8432)

Taylor translates:

Hail! All hail! with newer voices. (II, 161)

Goethe writes:

Ich fühle Kraft zu kühnem Fleiss. (I. 10184)

Taylor translates:

I feel new strength for bolder toil. (II, 233)

Goethe writes:

Schönes Gut im neuen Land. (I. 11136)

Taylor translates:

Fair estate of newer Land. (II, 275)

Goethe writes:

Da seh' ich auch die neue Wohnung. (I. 11346)

Taylor translates:

Thence shall I see the newer dwelling. (II, 284)

Of these comparatives which do not exist in the original, and which lack all adequate reason for being, I have found some seventy in Taylor's translation.

Similarly superlatives are piled up for which there is no justification in the original text. Goethe writes:

Wer schüttet alle schönen Frühlingsblüthen. (I. 152)

Taylor translates:

Who scatters every fairest April blossom. (I, 7)

Goethe writes:

Du Inbegriff der holden Schlummersäfte. (I. 693)

Taylor translates:

Essence of deadly finest powers and uses. (I, 29)

Goethe writes:

Wie sonderbar muss diesen schönen Hals. (I. 4203)

Taylor translates:

And, strange! around her fairest throat. (I, 193)

Goethe writes:

Erst senkt sein Haupt auf's kühle Polster nieder.
(I. 4628)

Taylor translates:

First on the coolest pillow let him slumber. (II, 4)

Goethe writes:

Sei als eure Zierde schön. (I. 5131)

Taylor translates:

Be your fairest ornament. (II, 23)

Goethe writes:

Gesellt zu Starken, Freien, Kühnen. (I, 9872)

Taylor translates:

And with the Strongest, Freest, Boldest. (II, 219)

Goethe writes:

Langer Schlaf verleiht dem Greise
Kurzen Wachens rasches Thun. (II, 11061-11062)

Taylor translates:

He but gains from longest slumber
Strength for briefest waking deed. (II, 271)

Goethe writes:

Den letzten, schlechten, leeren Augenblick. (I, 11589)

Taylor translates:

The latest, poorest, emptiest Moment—this. (II, 295)

Of these superlatives, which have no equivalent in the original and seem to lack a logical function, I have found some eighty in Taylor's translation.

Sometimes, in order to meet a deficit in his line, Taylor repeats the same thought in slightly different form:

Why must the stream so soon run dry *and fail us*. (I, 50)

How shall we leave the house, *and start*. (I, 83)

The man who with thee goes, *thy mate*. (I, 159)

Thou'lt hear a masterpiece, *no work completer*. (I, 170)

On my account be kind, *nor treat them rudely*. (I, 186)

Here! cast o'er

The knight your magic mantle, *and infold him*. (II, 101)

Sometimes, to eke out his line, Taylor adds a new thought, in several cases an infelicitous new thought:

Therein thou'rt free, *according to thy merits*. (I, 15)⁸¹

Art thou, *my gay one*. (I, 53)

⁸¹ Cf. *Academy*, December 1, 1871, p. 529: "Sometimes the concise nature of the English in comparison with the German idiom left a surplus

The lovely land of wine, and song, and *slumber*. (I, 91)
 Yet—all that drove my heart thereto,
 God! was so good, so dear, *so true*. (I, 165)
 And now Death comes, and *ruin*. (I, 208)
 Henry! I shudder *to think* of thee. (I, 216)⁸²
 'Tis he alone invents and *gives*. (II, 87)
 How Ulysses, lingering, *learned us*. (II, 112)
 Shall I attain its *blessing*. (II, 116)
 I only praise, in *loving duty*. (II, 119)
 In spite of Fate such love to win and *wear*. (II, 121)
 And roots of ancient oaks—the *vilest rare ways*. (II, 140)
 The traces cannot, of mine earthly being,
 In aeons perish,—*they are there*. (II, 295)
 Tell me, sweet children, *ere I miss you*. (II, 301)

Occasionally Taylor relieves the poverty of English syllables by forming offensive plurals. Such plurals are: *blisses* (I, 153; II, 159); *remorses* (II, 3); *uglinesses* (II, 110). *Leisures* (I, 65) is a bad plural, too, though it occurs for rime's, not for meter's sake.

Again he pieces out his line by making the word *real* disyllabic. This latter seems rather a favorite device. Instances of it will be found in I, 2, 28, 54, 113, 188, and II, 249.⁸³ Or he

of metrical space to Mr. Taylor in the filling up of which by additional words of his own he is not always very successful. In the Prologue in Heaven . . . 'Du darfst auch hier nur frei erscheinen.' This Mr. Taylor translates by 'Therein thou'rt free, *according to thy merits*,' which addition is, to use the very mildest term, absolutely meaningless."

⁸² Cf. *ibid.*: "Goethe also would never have thought of calling Spain the lovely land of wine, song, and *slumber!* or letting Margaret exclaim, as a climax of despairing love and agony,—'Henry! I shudder to think (!) of thee'; which under the circumstances, and as an equivalent of the heart rending 'Heinrich, mir graut vor dir!' appears inconceivably flat and silly."

⁸³ This must be somewhat annoying to Mr. Howells, who once upon a time praised Taylor for not doing this very thing. Cf. *Atlantic*, v. 37, p. 108: "In Mr. Taylor's work there is a technical perfection which . . . is wanting in nearly all our younger poets. . . . It is not enough to make musical verses; that alone is like playing by ear; the verses must be correct: correctness may be stiff, but there is no true elegance without it; and the poet who ekes out the measure of his line by making two syllables of such words as heaven, even, given, and the like, and three of such as difference, mystery (except at the end of a verse), may find precedents enough, but not excuse amongst the masters of his art in times since the best usage became law."

throws in a gratuitous phrase, which is usually not notably illuminating and therefore to be wished away. Examples are: *I fear me* (I, 51); *I fear* (I, 67); *I promise* (I, 76); *so please ye* (I, 80); *'tis not to be denied* (I, 80); *I'm thinking* (I, 84, 89); *in truth* (I, 107); *the fact is* (II, 11); *I insist* (II, 39); *I find* (II, 42); *in short* (II, 132, 297); *I throw* (II, 50); *I vow* (II, 259).

On the whole Gretchen's song "Meine Ruh' ist hin" has suffered more seriously than any other single passage from the necessary evil of padding. An English reviewer, who does not think the song could "be precisely reproduced by any combination of English syllables," has put his finger accurately upon its weaknesses. He says: "Goethe would scarcely have made Gretchen tell us that the world is bitterness as well as gall, or that her thought was lost just after she had informed us that her head was 'racked and crazed' . . . we may point to the subjective allusion contained in the words '*the bliss* in the clasp of his hand,' which is out of character with the wholly objective attitude of Gretchen's mind when calling up in imagination the charms of her lover."⁸⁴

Taylor's departures from the original meters are few in number. They occur for the most part in *vers irréguliers*, where an occasional hypermetrical line is no very grave offense. I have found but one line where it seems to me that much has been lost in deviating from the original number of feet. Taylor's hypermetrical line:

In yonder world, returns to me in this (II, 313)

forfeits, in my opinion, every atom of exultant charm residing in the original:

Er kommt zurück. (I. 12075)

Sometimes, for the rime's sake usually, Taylor adopts a word which is at best a very insipid rendering of his original:

Death is desired, and Life a *thing unblest*. (I, 63)

His noble *size*. (I, 155)

A little thievish and a little *frolicsome*. (I, 169)

I hope to see you *moulder*. (I, 198)

⁸⁴ Cf. *Saturday Review*, September 16, 1871, p. 370.

. . . he who changes
 Shall be *missed among the living*. (II, 33)
 I will not be, like others, *meanly flighty*. (II, 122)

Sometimes, or more accurately once, he leaves for the sake of the rime the German untranslated:

To leave the kettle, and singe the *Frau*. (I, 106)

Once he transfers the sound, again for rime's sake, but does not translate the sense:

As time, foul *ass*. (I, 107)

In this chapter may be properly discussed those lines in Taylor's "Faust" which incorrectly or obscurely render the original. Several such lines are obviously concessions made to the exigencies of rime and rhythm. Others may be so.

A fine young fellow's presence, to my thinking (I, 4)
 should read:

A fine young fellow's present, to my thinking.⁸⁵

"By sheer diffuseness" (I, 5) is a misapprehension of the phrase "in der Breite," which should be rendered: "in the world at large."⁸⁶ "And never cared to have them in my keeping" (I, 14) is loose for "Hab' ich mich niemals gern befangen" (I, 319). It might almost appear that Taylor regarded *sich befangen* as synonymous with *fangen*.

Mr. J. Henry Senger objects to Taylor's rendering of the lines:

Ja, eure Reden, die so blinkend sind,
 In denen ihr der Menschheit Schnitzel kräuselt. (II. 554-555)

Mr. Senger says: "Bayard Taylor, in a note, justly objects to taking *der Menschheit* as a genitive; yet his 'shredded thought like paper' (I, 24) is, I think, far from representing the exact idea. *Schnitzel kräuseln* means 'cut up and curl paper' (especially scraps of paper) for ornaments, like for instance, those put round candles to receive their drippings (French *bobèches de papier*), the meaning, then, would be: Your glittering speeches which are humanity's flimsy ornaments."⁸⁷

⁸⁵ Cf. note to l. 79.

⁸⁶ Cf. note to l. 93.

⁸⁷ Cf. *Modern Language Notes*, v. XV, no. 3, col. 164, III.

Objection has been made to Taylor's translation of the lines :

Und doch, an diesen Klang von Jugend auf gewöhnt,
Ruft er auch jetzt zurück mich in das Leben. (ll. 769-770)
And yet, from childhood up familiar with the note,
To life it now renews the old allegiance. (I, 32)

The critic says: "Here the omission of a substitute for the pronoun 'mich,' which is grammatically questionable, and the loss of the self-explanatory gender in the 'er,' render the passage sadly unintelligible to mortals endowed with only the ordinary powers of vision."⁸⁸ "A slave am I, whate'er I do" (I, 69) quite misses the force of "wie ich beharre," which is equivalent to "as soon as I stagnate."⁸⁹ "Fort! Fort! Ich kehre nimmermehr" (l. 2730) is incorrectly rendered: "Go! go! I never will retreat" (I, 119); and, as has been indicated elsewhere, an important point has thus been lost. "Faust, after a long discussion with his companion, winds up with this *argumentum ad hominem*:

'Wer Recht behalten will und hat nur eine Zunge,
Behält's gewiss'— (ll. 3069-3070)

the meaning of which is, 'Who wants to have the better of his adversary in argument is sure to have it if he only possess a tongue.' Mr. Taylor says:

whoever
Intends to have the right, if but his tongue be *clever*, (!)
Will have it, certainly (I, 137)

which is exactly the reverse of what Goethe wishes to imply. Faust means to say that he himself is by far the more clever of the two, but that the Devil has the louder voice and longer breath."⁹⁰

In the line "Denkt ihr an mich" (l. 3106), "Mr. Taylor incorrectly makes 'Denkt' an imperative, and by so doing robs the exclamation, to our mind, of all significance."⁹¹ Perhaps in response to the foregoing complaint Taylor altered (in the

⁸⁸ Cf. *Saturday Review*, September 16, 1871, p. 370.

⁸⁹ Cf. note to l. 1710.

⁹⁰ Cf. *Academy*, December 1, 1871, p. 529.

⁹¹ Cf. *Saturday Review*, September 16, 1871, p. 370.

Kennett edition and in all the one-volume editions from 1875 on) the line to: "So you but think a moment's space on me" (I, 140). From his notes,⁹² however, it appears that he still believed *denkt* to be an imperative. A somewhat similar instance is to be found in the lines:

Dost thou thy father honor, as a youth? . . .

Dost thou, as man, increase the stores of truth (I, 43)

where "a conditional sentence is mistaken for an interrogative."⁹³ "By a curious blunder . . . he (*i. e.*, Taylor) overlooks the gender, and consequently mistakes the antecedent of the relative in the following passage:

Ergreif' mein Herz, du süsse Liebespein!

Die du vom Thau der Hoffnung schmachkend lebst. (ll. 2689-2690)

The idea of *pain* living piningly on the dew of hope is undoubtedly a far more subtle one than that conveyed in the translation; but it is unmistakably the one intended by Goethe."⁹⁴

An English critic objects to Taylor's substitution of *my* for *thy* in a certain case. He says: "Gretchen is naively telling Faust how his rude salutation affected her. The German runs thus:

'Ach, dacht ich, hat er in *deinem* Betragen

Was Freches, Unanständiges gesehen.' (ll. 3171-3172)

Mr. Taylor substitutes '*my*' for the German '*thy*' (I, 143). We are quite aware that this quaint style of addressing oneself is much indulged in by Germans, even of the more educated classes; but we think it a striking characteristic of simple and unsophisticated people generally, and as such it is an integral touch in Margaret's portrait."⁹⁵ Taylor is at least consistent in altering this *thy* of self-address to *my*, as will be seen by consulting Faust I, pp. 118, 207, and Faust II, p. 115. Taylor changes likewise an *ich* of the original to *we* (II, 309).

Objection has also been made to Taylor's rendering of the lines:

Einmal recht ausgeweint

(I. 3321)

⁹² Cf. *Faust*, I, note 105.

⁹³ Cf. *Academy*, December 1, 1871, p. 529.

⁹⁴ Cf. *Saturday Review*, September 16, 1871, p. 370.

⁹⁵ Cf. *Saturday Review*, September 16, 1871, p. 370.

which he translates :

Now, wept beyond her tears. (I, 151)

The critic says: "We find once or twice a violent effort to retain even the verbal form. For instance, German 'ausgeweint,' which cannot, we think, be rendered except by a circumlocution, is supposed to be translated by making an adjective of the active participle 'wept.'"⁹⁶ There is no motion in the preposition "an" in the line:

Und Hüft' an Ellenbogen (I. 972)

as is plainly shown by the verb "ruhten" three lines back, but Taylor translates it:

And hips and elbows straying. (I, 40)⁹⁷

"In's Freie" (I. 4538) does not mean "To freedom" (I, 213) but "out of doors."⁹⁸

Mr. R. McLintock objects to Taylor's rendering of the "Chor der Engel" (ll. 757-761). Mr. McLintock says: "Except for the rhyming, one would be inclined to opine them (*i. e.*, the lines of the "Chor der Engel") not extra-difficult to render in English. Yet, if my reading of them is correct, the five best known of our translators—Anster, Blackie, Swanwick, Taylor, Martin, and to these I will add Mr. Coupland and the new anonymous 'Beta'—have all of them failed to give their true sense. . . . Mr. Coupland (*The Spirit of Goethe's 'Faust'*) with the world before him, quotes Bayard Taylor's version, and so appears to stamp it with his approval. . . . What a consensus! And I am going to declare with Tennyson's 'Sailor Boy,' that—"They are all to blame; they are all to

⁹⁶ Cf. *Saturday Review*, September 16, 1871, p. 370.

⁹⁷ Cf. *ibid.*: "Yet though he himself (*i. e.*, Taylor) undoubtedly shows a knowledge both of the spirit and the letter of the original to which but few foreigners could pretend, he forms no exception to the common human liability to err. Thus, for instance, it is necessary to remind him that there is no motion implied in the preposition *an* in the expression 'Hüfte (*sic*) an Ellenbogen,' and we are at a loss to understand how he managed to get the notion of straying out of it."

⁹⁸ Cf. *ibid.*: "One more inaccuracy must not go unnoticed. 'In's Freie' does not mean 'to Freedom,' as Mr. Taylor imagines, but simply into the open air."

blame!’ In the German, Christ is the subject of the first line only. *Der Liebende* is the friend, disciple, adherent, lover (‘Romans, countrymen, and lovers!’), who had been subjected to the grievous, but wholesome, discipline of seeing his Friend and Master vanish and the promise seem to fail. The words *heilsam und übende*—so right and suitable when applied to the possibly weak-kneed believer, so utterly inapplicable to Christ—should have suggested to the translators that the latter could not be the subject of the last four lines. And then the exact parallelism of the First Angel Chorus. . . . The adjective used substantively and followed by three qualifying words, with the sense completed only in the last line—these things should have drawn attention to the content, even though the form might have to be altered in the passage into another language. Had the original tongue been Greek instead of German, half a century of translators would not have been allowed to follow each other like a flock of sheep, each jumping from the ground as he passes a given spot.”⁹⁹

G. von Löper objects to Taylor’s rendering *Fideler* (Goethe’s “Faust” I, p. 212) by *Good Fellow* (I, 200). With other good authorities he would prefer to render it *Fiddler*.¹⁰⁰ G. von Löper adds: “Nicht Goethe’s feinem Sprachsinn ist ein Missbrauch des Wortes in seiner Blocksbergdichtung, viel eher Taylor’s Sprachgefühl im Deutschen ein Irrtum zuzutragen. Auf Taylor kann ein Deutscher sich nicht verweisen lassen.”¹⁰¹

“Beards of beauty” (II, 10) is an inaccurate translation of “Schönbärte” (I. 4767). Appearances to the contrary, the *schön* of this word has nothing to do with *beauty* but means: “*larve, maske, verderbt aus schemebart, schembart, eigentlich ‘bärtige maske’ . . . (der bart war in alter zeit das wesentliche bei der maske)*.”¹⁰²

One dreams of mandrake, nightly growing,

The other of the dog of Hell, (II, 17)

is not a particularly intelligent rendering of,

⁹⁹ Cf. *Academy*, v. XLVIII, no. 1234, p. 568.

¹⁰⁰ Cf. Calvin Thomas’s edition of *Faust*, v. I, p. 332.

¹⁰¹ Cf. *Goethe-Jahrbuch*, Band II, S. 439.

¹⁰² Cf. Grimm, *Deutsches Wörterbuch*, *sub voce* Schönbart.

Der eine faselt von Alraunen

Der andre von dem schwarzen Hund. (II. 4979-4980)

Dem schwarzen Hund has nothing to do with Cerberus or any other "dog of Hell," as will be seen by consulting the note to II. 4979-4980, in Professor Thomas's edition of "Faust."

I straightway put my harness on (II, 36)

is a more or less literal but not an idiomatic translation of:

Es mich sogleich in Harnisch bringt (I. 5466)

for Grimm expressly quotes this passage as an instance of the "freer" or derived use of the phrase "in Harnisch bringen."¹⁰³

Yet the crowd seems not to share in't (II, 37)

is a strange distortion of the actual grammatical conditions and of the sense of the passage:—Doch er theilet nicht die Menge (I. 5514). "Menge" is accusative not nominative, and "theilet" means "divide" in the sense of "thrust asunder," not "divide" in the sense "share."

Arrears of pay are settled duly (II, 57)

does not correctly render:

Abschläglich ist der Sold entrichtet (I. 6045)

which means that payment "on account" has been made the soldiers:

And yet, why need you stiffen? (II, 107)

does not translate:

Und doch, nicht abzuschweifen. (I. 7098)

That little one, she warms my gizzard (II, 134)

is free and not singularly felicitous for:

Die Kleine möcht' ich mir verpfänden. (I. 7773)

We have asked for eternal truth (II, 160)

¹⁰³ Cf. Grimm, *Deutsches Wörterbuch*, sub voce Harnisch; "die formeln im harnisch sein, in den harnisch bringen haben zunächst nur den sinn gerüstet, kriegsbereit sein, kampferüstet machen . . . sie werden aber schon früher als bilder für einen kampfbereiten, kampffrimmen, zornigen menschen gebraucht, z. b. bereits in den fastnachtsspielen . . . diese bilder bewahren noch lange später ihre ganze sinnliche schärfe . . . wenn sie auch vielfach abgeblaszt verwendet werden . . . mit freierem ausdrücke . . . doch wo was rühmliches gelingt, es mich sogleich in harnisch bringt."

is a misleading translation of the line:

Wir haben ewige Treue begehrt. (I. 8418)

Taylor rendered incorrectly the line:

Des Herren Wort es gibt allein Gewicht (I. 11502)

translating it:

God's Word alone confers on me the might.

(royal octavo edition, 1871, p. 400)

Mr. W. S. Rayner of Baltimore called Taylor's attention to the error, but not until after Taylor's death was the line changed to:

The master's Word alone bestows the might (II, 291)

for the uncorrected line stands in the Kennett edition and in the royal octavo reprints of the first edition as late at least as 1879.¹⁰⁴

The criticisms passed by Professor J. M. Hart upon Taylor's translation are somewhat more subtle. They are specific but might readily be made to apply to the entire translation. Professor Hart writes: "Mr. Taylor says, on page 12 of his preface, 'There are words, it is true, with so delicate a bloom upon them that it can in no wise be preserved.' We suspect that 'Faust' contains more such words than Mr. Taylor would be willing to admit; and not single words merely, but collocations of words, engendering a grace or a force that no second arrangement can hope to preserve. . . . Our theory is simply this: Does any given translation produce, in its parts and as an entirety, the same impression that the original would give, if read with a good understanding of the language and the accessories of time and place? Does the translation call forth exactly the same emotions and shades of emotion? Does it make precisely the same appeals to our sensuous, our imaginative,

¹⁰⁴ Taylor's unpublished reply to Mr. Rayner reads in part: "I thank you for calling my attention to the line you quote. My translation is undoubtedly incorrect. As it was written nearly six years ago, I cannot recall what cause led me to translate Herr as 'God' instead of 'lord' or 'master,'—but I was probably misled by one of the many commentaries which I then studied, in order to acquaint myself with all varieties of interpretation."

our reflective nature? Does it take the same hold on our ear and heart? If this theory is reasonable, we feel constrained to yield to Lewes' dictum, that no translation can be to us what the original is. At best it is merely an approximation, and the further question becomes one of degree rather than of quality. . . . The reader of 'Faust' will remember the magnificent description of the tempest on the Brocken. . . . Mr. Taylor's translation of it is an admirable rendering, we will not deny, but below the original in several particulars. *Girren* and *Brechen* are applied to the branches, and have the force of our 'moaning' and 'snapping'; whereas the 'Dröhnen' of the heavier trunks is to be rendered by the more forcible 'quaking' or 'groaning.' They cannot be said to 'thunder' until they fall, which comes afterwards. The 'Knarren' and the 'Gähnen' of the roots are not fully represented by 'twisting asunder,' but rather by 'screaking' and 'wrenching.' The original 'übertrümmerten Klüfte' is much more expressive than 'wreck-strewn gorges.' It means 'gorges heaped up to the top and over with wreck.' Finally 'surges' is a word properly applied to the commotion of water, not of air. The force of the original is best given by 'the winds are hissing and howling.' . . .

"Again, Faust's rhapsody, on seeing the archetype of womanly beauty in the witches' mirror. . . . Can we truthfully admit that the one has the direct, burning eloquence of the other? Does the translation bring out, so far as half way, the despairing contrast between heaven and earth in the original? . . . Then the word 'mated' destroys the climax by redundancy. We pass to another instance, where the discrepancy is more palpable—the fearful sarcasm with which Mephistopheles (as Faust) lashes the law, to the utter confusion of the poor student who has come to the Doctor for advice. . . ." Taylor's translation "sounds like Mephistopheles with the venom extracted. Laws are emphatically *not* 'fitted' from generation to generation, according to Mephistopheles. They are not changed, but merely 'drag themselves' from age to age, 'crawling softly' from place to place. '*Plage*' is here at least to be rendered by 'curse,' 'torment'; 'worry' being far

too feeble. The concluding line, 'This to consider, there's, alas! no hurry,' utterly fails to reproduce the exquisite Mephistophelian sneer: Of *that* (our natural right as man), good lack! we never hear the mention! Let us content ourselves with examining the naively brutal couplet of the Theatre Director: . . ." Taylor's "version certainly has no taint of brutality about it, whereas the original means, in so many words: If you give yourself out for a poet, why trot out your poetry, as a drill-sergeant would his squad."¹⁰⁵

Professor Hart evidently felt, as did a reviewer in the *Aldine*, that, "There is, running through the whole and continually cropping out in marked relief, that subtle dissonance of a half note or so which makes all the difference between harmony and its opposite. . . . The original . . . is in much the same relation to the translation that an air perfectly played or sung would bear to the same music persistently executed—in technical parlance—'half a note off.'¹⁰⁶

¹⁰⁵ Cf. *Galaxy*, March, 1871, p. 464.

¹⁰⁶ Cf. *Aldine*, review of Taylor's *Faust*, March, 1871, p. 41.

CHAPTER III

THE ENGLISH OF TAYLOR'S TRANSLATION

Professor Barrett Wendell, speaking of "Faust" as Taylor's "most meritorious work," says: "The result in no wise resembles normal English."¹ Professor Barrett Wendell does not attempt to establish his assertion. The scope of his book did not permit that. It can be shown, however, that he is in some degree correct. It can be shown furthermore that much in Taylor's translation, which "in no wise resembles normal English," can be traced in source to a recognized excellence of the translation—its formal fidelity.²

Taylor says: "My own task has been cheered by the discovery that the more closely I reproduced the language of the original, the more of its rhythmical character was transferred at the same time."³ It was this meticulous fidelity to the text of the original, which frequently induced Taylor to stretch the English idiom until it snapped. Where Taylor is un-English he is usually German.

Un-English are the nominalized adjectives, which Taylor persists in using. But they are excellent German. Dr. Krüger justly says: "Die Kraft des Englischen, Eigenschaftswörter zu Hauptwörtern zu erheben, ist gering."⁴ Bayard Taylor constantly oversteps that which is permitted in this regard. Nor does it, to my mind, help the matter any that he for the most part writes these nominalized adjectives with large initials.

Thus Goethe writes, "Und nennt die Guten" (l. 15), and Taylor translates all too faithfully, "And names the Good"

¹ Cf. Barrett Wendell, *A Literary History of America*, pp. 455-458.

² Cf. *Scribner's Monthly*, v. 19, p. 266: "The characteristics of Taylor's 'Faust' are sympathetic quality, rapid poetic handling, absolute fidelity to the text."

³ Cf. *Faust*, I, pref., p. xiv.

⁴ Cf. Dr. Gustav Krüger, *Englische Ergänzungsgrammatik und Stilistisches*, Dresden und Leipzig, 1898, p. 41.

(I, 1). "The Good" may mean one of two things in English. It may indicate either the abstract quality of goodness as in the phrase, "the good, the beautiful, the true," or it may be an universal term, equivalent to "all those persons characterized by the quality of goodness." But it cannot, by any stretch of English idiom, refer, as in Goethe it does refer, to some few good persons previously specified by the poet.

When Taylor offers us, "Escape from the Created" (II, 68) for "Entfliehe dem Entstandenen" (l. 6276); "And find, alas! my near-related" (II, 132) for "Und finde leider Nahverwandte" (l. 7741); "Leave her, the Ugly" (II, 133) for "Lass diese Garstige" (l. 7752); "Certainly, ye Inexperienced!" (II, 208) for "Allerdings, ihr Unerfahrenen!" (l. 9595); "Save Coarse were drudging . . . Would Fine be able" (II, 26) for "Denn wirkten Grobe . . . Wie kämen Feine" (ll. 5207-5209); "Displays the Marvellous, that each desires" (II, 76) for "Was jeder wünscht, das Wunderwürdige schauen" (l. 6438), we are struck, it must be confessed, by the literalness of the rendering; but literalness ceases to be a virtue, if it leaves us mentally groping for the noun, which, according to English idiom, ought to follow, but does not.

Goethe's lines, "Ihm fehlt es nicht an geistigen Eigenschaften, Doch gar zu sehr am greiflich Tüchtighaften" (ll. 8249-8250), are translated by Taylor, "He has no lack of qualities ideal, But far too much of palpable and real" (II, 153). Here the lesser fault is the unfinished air which the unsupported adjectives create. The sense is ambiguous, and the impression given the reader of Homunculus becomes inevitably erroneous. Only one acquainted with the original text, I fancy, will know that he is to understand the noun "lack" after the word "much."

Taylor offends against normal English by an ill-advised affectation of inversion. He believed that "English metre compels the use of inversions."⁶ And this perverse belief led him to construct sentences, many of them, which approximate more closely the German ideal than the English standard

⁶ Cf. *Faust*, I, pref., p. xiv.

of sentence structure. It may be conceded that English syntax exhibits no adamantine rules concerning word-order; but there are certain broad principles, which good usage approves and affects.

In the first place word-order plays its part in poetry as in prose.⁶ It is only an inferior or a lazy poet who is satisfied to let the logical and the metrical stress fall asunder. Secondly the approved word-order in English is, generally speaking, subject, verb, object. And that man only, who by departing from this word-order, achieves the most delightful or the most powerful of poetic effects, is pardoned for the departure. "The English language," says Professor Barrett Wendell "has fewer inflections than almost any other known to the civilized world; that is, each word has fewer distinct forms to indicate its relations to the words about it. All nouns have possessives and plurals; all verbs have slightly different forms for the present and the past tense; but this is about all. In English, then, the relation of word to word is expressed not by the forms of the words, but generally by their order; and any wide departure from the normal order of a sentence—in brief, subject, verb, object—is apt to alter or to destroy the meaning . . . what 'Nero Agrippina killed' may mean, nobody without a knowledge of the facts can possibly decide. What is true of this simplest of sentences is true in a general way of any sentence in the English language. Good use has settled that the meaning of one great class of compositions in English—namely, of sentences—shall be indicated in general, not by the forms of the words which compose them, but by the order. Except within firmly defined limits, we cannot alter the order of words in English without violating good use; and in no language can we violate good use without grave and often fatal injury to our meaning. . . . While, on the one hand, then, we who use uninflected English are free from the disturbing array of grammatical rules and exceptions which

⁶ Cf. *Specimens of the Table Talk of the late Samuel Taylor Coleridge*, Harper and Brothers, New York, 1835, p. 110: "The definition of good Prose is—proper words in their proper places—of good Verse—the most proper words in their proper places."

so bothers us in Latin or in German, we are far less free than Romans or Germans to apply the principles of composition to the composing of sentences."⁷

Thirdly, it is recognized that by removing a word from its natural order we draw attention to that word.⁸ It is agreed that the beginning and the end of a sentence (especially the end of a sentence) are points of peculiar emphasis.⁹ If we distort words of slight importance from their natural position or thrust them to the beginning or to the end of the sentence, we are offending against "ease," and consequently against the normal English approved by good use. "Ease," says Professor Hill, "prohibits an arrangement that throws the emphasis *on*, and thus causes a suspension of the sense *at*, a particle or other unimportant word (as in this sentence). Such an arrangement is hostile to clearness, for it obliges the mind to halt at the very points which it would naturally hurry over; it is also hostile to force, for it emphasizes words that do not 'deserve distinction' at the expense of those that do."¹⁰

Taylor employs inversion sometimes to the point of ambiguity. He writes:

Ah, every utterance from the depths of feeling
The timid lips have stammeringly expressed,—
Now failing, now, perchance, success revealing,—
Gulps the wild Moment in its greedy breast:¹¹

If the reader here depend solely upon his knowledge of English word-order, he will, according to Professor Barrett Wendell's arrangement of subject, verb, object, interpret "utterance" as a nominative and "Moment" as an accusative. Not

⁷ Cf. Barrett Wendell, *English Composition*, p. 36 f.

⁸ Cf. A. S. Hill, *Principles of Rhetoric*, p. 207: "Any order which seems natural to the persons addressed is easier, as well as more forcible, than one which strikes them as strange and by its strangeness calls their attention from the substance to the form of the sentence."

⁹ Cf. Alexander Bain, *English Composition and Rhetoric*, v. I, p. 3, § 6: "As a rule the least prominent position in the sentence, is the MIDDLE. Hence for giving prominence we must choose either the BEGINNING or the END." Cf. *ibid.*, p. 4, § 9: "Both usage and reason agree in regarding the END of the sentence as the place of greatest strength of emphasis."

¹⁰ Cf. A. S. Hill, *Principles of Rhetoric*, p. 198.

¹¹ Cf. *Faust*, I, p. 4.

until he turns to the original text, can he be quite certain that he is wrong.

Quite as bad English as it is good German is Taylor's prodigal use of the capital. Instances of this habit will be found on almost every page of the "Faust." One of the critics writes facetiously: "In his use of capitals for substantives he (*i. e.*, Taylor) surpasses the inscrutable freaks of Mr. Carlyle himself. Thus, for instance, he speaks of the time when 'brooded Evil evil is begetting,'¹² though it would not be easy to discover any superiority in point of dignity which the progenitor in this case possesses over his offspring. The funniest instance of this capriciousness we have found occurs in no less solemn a passage than the Chorus of Blessed Boys, where we have—'For so tender unto all, it is, To Be.'¹³ This unexpected exaltation of such a modest preposition and such a diminutive verb affects us very oddly."¹⁴

The responsibility for this most un-English mannerism ought not, however, to be laid entirely at the door of German influence. For we shall find Taylor composing his prose notes (and that too where he is not translating) in much the same fashion.¹⁵ It may be objected that Taylor usually came fresh from Düntzer and Leutbecher when he wrote his notes. Hence German practice still maintained its hold upon him. But reference to any volume of Taylor's poems, from "Rhymes of Travel" to "Prince Deukalion," will convince the skeptical that the phenomenon of lavish capitalization, as exhibited throughout Taylor's work, ought not to be solely ascribed to German influence.

In the *Encyclopaedia Britannica*¹⁶ we read: "As a critical friend¹⁷ has written of him, 'his nature was so ardent, so full-

¹² Cf. *Faust*, II, p. 10.

¹³ Cf. *Faust*, II, p. 307.

¹⁴ Cf. *Saturday Review*, October 7, 1871, pp. 466 ff.

¹⁵ Cf. *Faust*, II, Notes, p. 463; "Love is the all-uplifting and all-redeeming power on Earth and in Heaven; and to Man it is revealed in its most pure and perfect form through Woman."

¹⁶ Cf. *Encyclopaedia Britannica*, *sub voce* Taylor, Bayard.

¹⁷ The reference is to Mr. Stedman who uses these words in his article on Taylor in *Scribner's Monthly*, v. XIX, p. 84. It is hardly possible that two men would express the same thought in precisely the same

blooded, that slight and common sensations intoxicated him, and he estimated their effect, and his power to transmit it to others, beyond the true value.' He felt life as perhaps only the poetic temperament can experience the beauty of the world; single words thus became for him so charged with poetry that he overlooked the fact that to most people these were, simply in themselves, mere abstract terms—sunshine, sea, spring, morning, night, and so forth. Thus a stanza having absolutely nothing original or striking or even poetic in it would, because born of him, seem to be poetry unadulterate: to *his* mind, each line, each word, was charged with delightful significance, therefore—so he felt—would be so also to the sympathetic reader." It may be then that Taylor looked upon capitalization as a device whereby the reader might be induced to take words, as Taylor himself took them, at more than their face value.

When Goethe writes, "Ein guter Rath ist auch nicht zu verschmähn" (l. 7849), Taylor is precipitated into a pitfall by his zealous striving after fidelity. He translates, "Good counsel, also, is not to reject" (II, 136). It is not possible in English, however (save in some few idiomatic expressions), to employ, as the German regularly does, an active infinitive in a passive sense.

In true German fashion Taylor lets his reader wait unduly for the preterite participle. Sentences like, "I have not snares around thee cast" (I, 58), "Thou hast it destroyed" (I, 65), "Has then my cry To yonder sky, The course of Nature from its orbit stirred" (II, 139), "And now by him beforehand to his city sent" (II, 165), are modelled closely after their German prototypes, as may be seen by reference respectively to ll. 1426, 1608, 7911–7913, 8525. Even where the original text does not drive him to it, Taylor will prefer a German to an English cadence, as when he writes, "The outer angle, you may see, Is open left" (I, 57).

Of the inversion of the subject after an adverb or other word not modifying the subject, I have found some one hundred and twenty-five examples in Taylor's translation. In

words, yet Mr. Smyth ascribes the above quotation to R. H. Stoddard. Cf. Smyth's *Bayard Taylor*, p. 267.

many of these cases, indeed, in seven of the fifteen which I shall quote, it will be seen that the inversion was not forced upon Taylor by the particular sentence in the original, which he happened to be rendering. Certain of these inversions, together with similar instances of the relegation of the preterite participle to the end of the sentence, seem, therefore, to be due to fidelity in a larger sense, to an affectation, whether studied or unconscious, of the usage of German syntax. Thus Taylor writes, "Christ no more found we" (I, 31), "Obedience, more than ever, claims he" (I, 36), "Yet in the word must some idea be" (I, 79), "Yet always doesn't the thing succeed" (I, 114), "When, piece by piece, can one the thing abroad display" (I, 127), "For painful is it" (I, 170), "Pity they the luckless man" (II, 3), "Favor I this cheerful place" (II, 31), "How warned I Paris" (II, 148), "Now float we contented" (II, 155), "Each other behold we not" (II, 189), "Forth from us with swiftness ran he" (II, 216), "Once with the last breath left the soul her house" (II, 296), "Love-pangs felt they" (II, 309), and "No longer needs the alphabet thy nation" (II, 58). In this last instance the word-order is so ambiguous that the reader cannot be quite sure whether the alphabet has ceased to need the nation or vice versa.

Taylor, still faithful to German syntax, holds his infinitives in abeyance until he has arrived at the end of his sentence. In the examples which are about to be cited, as indeed in the hundred other instances which might be quoted, this idiosyncrasy was not always forced upon the translator by the corresponding sentence in the original. German word-order seems to have been fluttering perpetually before his mind's eye, and German cadences seem to have been singing in his ear. He writes: "What use, a Whole compactly to present" (I, 5), "But might, the while, more useful be" (I, 9), "Who dares the child's true name in public mention" (I, 25), "One yearns, the rivers of existence, the very founts of Life to reach" (I, 49), "Who would himself therefrom deliver" (I, 69), "And, God! who can the field embrace" (I, 80), "Can woman, then, so lovely be" (I, 105), "By storm she cannot captured be" (I, 115), "What can within it be" (I, 121), "Shall that

a nosegay be" (I, 143), "One dares not that before chaste ears declare" (I, 151), "One that to her can a candle hold" (I, 168), "Meanwhile, may not the treasure risen be" (I, 169), "Could I thy withered body kill" (I, 174), "One must not so squeamish be" (I, 192), "How can I its meaning mention" (II, 37), "How can he in the cheat confide" (II, 52), "Things can't in Heaven more cheerful be" (II, 57), "Thou wilt my whispers like a master heed" (II, 75), "Let me this labyrinth of flames explore" (II, 106), "One must with modern thought the thing bemaster" (II, 106), "Express thyself, and 'twill a riddle be" (II, 108), "And most impatient am, my glass to shatter" (II, 136), "Let him an honest soldier be" (II, 261), "Than rich to be" (II, 280), "The traces cannot, of mine earthly being, In aeons perish" (II, 295), "Let me in the azure Tent of Heaven, in light unfurled, Here thy Mystery measure" (II, 310), "But at once shall gentle be" (II, 311).

In German we are accustomed after a relative pronoun or a subordinate conjunction, to find the finite verb quite at the end of the sentence. In reading Taylor's translation we gradually grow to expect the same phenomenon. In this usage Taylor follows his model very closely. The sentences which I shall quote, as well as some ninety others which I have noted, are all constructed with pronounced literalness after the corresponding lines in Goethe. Taylor writes: "What you the Spirit of the Ages call" (I, 25), "The few, who thereof something really learned" (I, 25), "As thou, up yonder, with running and leaping, Amused us hast" (I, 49), "Which nowhere worthier is" (I, 50), "And when thou in the feeling wholly blessed art" (I, 158), "The man who with thee goes" (I, 159), "When thou, still innocent, Here to the altar cam'st" (I, 175), "But howso'er she hasten may" (I, 183), "He ne'er will fly, who now not flies" (I, 185), "But if you forwards go" (I, 191), "He snuffles all he snuffle can" (I, 199), "For such discourses very dangerous be" (II, 14), "How much the scamp to promise seems" (II, 41), "It almost seemed as if I Pluto were" (II, 55), "When I to thee Thessalian witches name" (II, 100), "If this would only longer last" (II, 135),

"For here, where spectres from their hell come" (II, 136), "Though erewhile, by spells nocturnal, Thee Thessalian hags infernal, Downward drew" (II, 145), "Which the true man comfort gives" (II, 158), "When I here with Clytemnestra sister-like, With Castor and with Pollux sporting grew" (II, 164), "Now when all things in order thou inspected hast" (II, 167), "Yet that I Her, Horrible, here with eyes behold" (II, 172), "When thou thine arms so fair Charmingly liftest" (II, 215), "Let happen all that happen can" (II, 255), "Art thou Baucis, who the coldly Fading mouth refreshment gave" (II, 272), "When they to me the information gave" (II, 294).

It is frequently the case that a German sentence will close with an adverbial particle. This is excellent usage in German, but it is poor usage in English, since it gives an unimportant word the most prominent position in the English sentence—the end, and is consequently destructive of the quality which Professor A. S. Hill calls "ease." Examples of this un-English usage in Taylor's translation are: "A German can't endure the French to see or hear of" (I, 95), "By the chimney out" (I, 102), "I go so little out" (I, 163), "The sword Thy heart in" (I, 166), "It hangs like lead my feet about" (II, 17), "This softly heaving brine on" (II, 162), "It rises heavenward up" (II, 186), "As with the month they come, and cooked with appetite in" (II, 264), "Whack! was she caught, and fast my claws her hide in" (II, 297).

Inelegant English, much better German in fact than English, are compounds formed of the particles "there," "where," and "here" plus some preposition or other. Taylor uses rather too many of them.¹⁸ Goethe's Gretchen may say: "Doch—alles

¹⁸ Examples are: "therein" (I, 7, 15, 50, 119, 153, 170, 190; II, 18, 36, 67, 95, 118, 191, 230, 237, 242, 245, 310), "thereat" (II, 236), "thereafter" (II, 72, 240, 287), "thereof" (I, 25), "thereto" (I, 50, 58, 65, 69, 77, 165; II, 46, 69, 147, 170, 174), "therefor" (I, 66), "therefrom" (I, 69, 132; II, 126, 137, 197), "therewith" (I, 70, 93, 151, 170, 190; II, 15, 232), "thereon" (I, 76, 127, 156, 183, 190, 212; II, 44, 255), "thereunto" (I, 101), "thereby" (II, 143, 188), "thereout" (I, 120), "whereunto" (II, 233), "whereon" (I, 20, 193; II, 61, 106, 170), "whereto" (I, 20, 72; II, 167), "whereby" (I, 24, 101), "wherefrom" (I, 25, 109, 178; II, 106, 195), "wherewith" (I, 64; II, 84, 141, 175, 270), "wherein" (I, 108), "whereof" (I, 192; II, 72, 271, 292), "herein" (II, 19), "hereon" (II, 230), "hereby" (II, 266).

was dazu mich trieb, Gott! war so gut! ach war so lieb!" (ll. 3585-3586). But Taylor's Gretchen ought not to prate after her: "Yet—all that drove my heart thereto, God! was so good, so dear, so true!" (I, 165). The word "thereto" might reasonably occur in some legal statement of Gretchen's wrongs, but it is quite out of keeping with the simplicity of Gretchen's own vocabulary, with the unaffected sadness of her mood, and with the lyric tenderness of the lines. Again Goethe may write properly enough: "So oft er trank daraus" (l. 2766). But Taylor, when he writes modern English, may not imitate such usage. "As oft as he drank thereout" (I, 120), is an impossible construction, since "out" now-a-days is an adverb and does not lend itself to a combination with "there," "here," or "where."

I am aware that in a larger English grammar—such as that of Maetzner or of Bain—one can find whole lists of inversions successfully ventured upon by the best English poets. Keats wrote:

Much have I travelled in the realms of gold
And many goodly states and kingdoms seen;
Round many western islands have I been.¹⁹

Wordsworth, the champion of prose word-order in poetic diction, wrote:

O joy! that in our embers
Is something that doth live.²⁰

And Tennyson wrote:

Of old sat Freedom on the heights,
The thunders breaking at her feet:
Above her shook the starry lights.²¹

When we read such inversions we are conscious usually of some charm, distinction or force which has been gained by means of them. The great English poets were masters and language for the most part did their will. As Shakespeare has it, "Nice customs curtsy to great kings." Where there is no

¹⁹ Cf. *On first looking into Chapman's Homer*.

²⁰ Cf. *Ode on Intimations of Immortality*.

²¹ Cf. *On a Mourner*.

gain in grace, distinction or force, the use of inversion, even in the work of poets of established repute, has been censured by competent critics. Walter Savage Landor, in the Imaginary Conversation between Porson and Southey, makes Porson say that the phrases "have I required" and "have I desired" in the first stanza of Wordsworth's "Laodameia" are "worse than prosaic." Wordsworth himself agreed with Landor in this matter, and made some seemingly unsuccessful effort to banish the offending inversions.²²

When we read the inversions and transpositions of Taylor's translation, we seek in vain any sort of poetic compensation for them; we are affected solely by their strangeness, their all too apparent necessity, and by Taylor's thralldom to his instrument. That these inversions are due in part to a touching fidelity to the original fails to reconcile us to them.

There remain certain inelegancies of diction which can hardly be referred directly to the influence of the German. Taylor deviates from normal English in his use of clipped forms, without the justification of such expedient in his original. As Poe somewhere inquires, "What can be well said in defense of the unnecessary nonsense of 'ware' for 'aware'?"²³ Taylor employs *ware* for *aware* (II, 282), *stead* for *instead* (II, 60, 179, 189, 309), *minishing* for *diminishing* (II, 273), *twixt* for *betwixt* (I, 45; II, 197), *wildering* for *bewildering* (I, 71, 180; II, 74), *scape* for *escape* (I, 107; II, 134), *mid* for *amid* (I, 11; II, 162, 205), *neath* for *beneath* (II, 41, 272, 283), *em* for *them* (II, 65), *i* for *in* (II, 17), *o* for *of* (I, 12). Moreover, there is an annoyingly constant recurrence of "'t is" and "'t was" and "'t were" throughout the entire text.

It is a pity, I think, that Taylor did not employ the pronoun *ye*, "As carefully discriminated, especially in the older English, the nominative and vocative being *ye* and the dative and accusative *you*."²⁴ The English in which the distinction continued to be made is not excessively old. We find the usage still observed in Byron. Taylor must at least have credit for having

²² Cf. *Walter Savage Landor*, by John Forster, v. 2, p. 25.

²³ Cf. E. A. Poe, *The Literati*, review of E. B. Barrett's poems.

²⁴ Cf. *Century Dictionary*, *sub voce ye*.

been fairly consistent in the course he chose to pursue. He writes: "I find ye" (I, 1),²⁵ "bind ye" (I, 1), "Be the reign assigned ye" (I, 1), "my father used ye" (I, 28), "What ails ye" (II, 45), "unknown to ye" (II, 66), "ye I hail" (II, 164), "from ye" (II, 168), "To save herself, and ye appendages with her" (II, 182), "I call ye" (II, 263), "upon Ye Five" (II, 266), "God's high Presence strengthens ye" (II, 308), "The teacher before ye" (II, 308), "Peace is yet with ye" (II, 128).

Bayard Taylor is often guilty of imperfect rimes. But we should regard it as a very considerable feat if any man turned out the twelve thousand odd lines of "Faust" with a faultless rime in every instance. Goethe himself did not accomplish that.²⁶ Moreover, Taylor has taken the sting from criticism by admitting his defects in this respect.²⁷ He says: "I make no apology for the imperfect rhymes, which are frequently a trans-

²⁵ Cf. review of Taylor's *Faust* in the *Independent*: "Mr. Taylor's 'I find ye' is purely a signal of distress for rhyme, having no equivalent in the original. Can he have thought that any 'subtile and haunting music' here required him to violate a plain rule of English grammar for the sake of 'find ye' rather than 'find you'?"

²⁶ Cf. A. Bielschowsky, *Goethe: Sein Leben und seine Werke*, v. II, p. 263: "Die Form des Faustfragments ist der Hans Sachsche Knittelvers, die Ausdrucksweise natürlich, oft geradezu derb, der Reim schlagend, aber nicht immer rein, zuweilen sogar dialektisch recht unrein." Cf. also Herrig, *A. f. d. S. d. n. S.*, v. XV, 331 ff., Dr. Daniel Sanders says "Dass er (*i. e.*, Goethe) sich viele unreine Reime erlaubt hat, bedarf der Erwähnung nicht; namentlich reimt er von Vokalen, e, ä, ö, mit einander; ebenso i mit ü; eu und ei, und beachtet die Schärfung und Dehnung der Vokale nicht immer."

Cf. *Der Mäcen*, Berlin und Leipzig, sine dato, by Detlev von Liliencron, p. 58: "Platen reimte rein, und das können die Deutschen durchaus nicht leiden; sofort werden sie misstrauisch: Das kann doch kein Dichter sein, der uns reine Reime schenkt. Mir ist ein unreiner Reim wie eine Ohrfeige. Deshalb wird es mir auch so schwer, einen von mir zu den Höchsten geschätzten Dichter, Martin Greif, zu lesen. Seine Reime, ähnlich wie bei Mörike, Schiller, Goethe, sind gradezu Seelenmörder. Es ist mir eine Unerklärlichkeit: ein Dichter muss doch starken Sinn für guten Klang und Schönheit haben; es muss ihm doch weh tun, ihn schmerzlich berühren, wenn er unrein reimt oder unreine Reime hört. Aber nein, es hilft nichts. Selbst Gottfried Keller reimt Erde und Gefährte."

"Wenn die Deutschen nicht mehr Teufel auf Zweifel reimen dürften, führen sie ohne Zweifel zum Teufel."

²⁷ Cf. *Faust*, I, pref., p. xv.

lation as well as a necessity." And in the matter of rime we ought reasonably to be lenient with a man who attempts to English a work containing the line:

Auf Teufel reimt der Zweifel nur;²⁸

Nevertheless, there are, I think, certain imperfect rimes so offensive to normal English that they are less tolerable than others. Among them are the so-called Cockney rimes, which deliberately invite to vulgar or slovenly pronunciation. There are a number of these rimes in Taylor's "Faust." Indeed, they have been detected in some of Taylor's work that was not translation.²⁹ In English it is offensive to rime -in (or -en) to -ing, as Taylor sometimes does:

On Sundays, holidays, there's naught I take delight in . . .
 The foreign people are a-fighting (I, 36)
 For us be suing . . .
 Calling to ruin. (I, 38)
 I see the plan thou art pursuing:
 Thou canst not compass general ruin. (I, 55)
 Thou'lt find, this drink thy blood compelling,
 Each woman beautiful as Helen. (I, 112)
 The sword Thy heart in,
 With anguish smarting. (I, 166)
 Are good to fish and sport in . . .
 With even devils consorting. (I, 199)
 Doors and entrances are open!
 Well,—at last there's ground for hoping. (II, 89)
 Incline, O Maiden,
 With Mercy laden,
 In light unfading. (II, 313)

Other bad rimes are:

Man's misery even to pity moves my nature;
 I've scarce the heart to plague the wretched creature. (I, 13)

²⁸ Cf. *Faust*, I, l. 4361.

²⁹ Cf. *Athenaeum*, no. 2666, p. 686, review of "Prince Deukalion": "Mr. Taylor falls into rhymes which, were he an Englishman, would be called Cockney. In one of the earliest lyrics we find thus 'whistle' as a rhyme to 'dismissal.' Subsequently 'repentance' rhymes to 'sentence,' and 'harden' to 'pardon.' The occasional example of great poets may be advanced in palliation of this method of forcing rhymes, but cannot justify it."

Therein thou'rt free, according to thy merits . . .
 Of all the bold, denying Spirits. (I, 15)
 And have a care to be most civil . . .
 So humanly to gossip with the Devil. (I, 15)
 I am no hair's-breadth more in height,
 Nor nearer to the Infinite. (I, 73)
 By level ways I've wandered hither,
 Where rubble now is piled together. (II, 135)
 Three have we brought hither,
 The fourth refused us altogether. (II, 150)

Quite as bad as Whittier's famous couplet are the lines:

Were not the first and second, then
 The third and fourth had never been. (I, 77)

Worst of all perhaps is the following:

The broom it scratches, the fork it thrusts,
 The child is stifled, the mother bursts. (I, 183)

Taylor again deviates from normal English by introducing archaic, obsolete and dialectic forms, which are all the more reprehensible since they are not the equivalent of the original text. Archaic³⁰ are such forms as *nathless* (I, 69; II, 68, 93, 178), *drave* (I, 74), *fere* (I, 106; II, 187), *dighted* (II, 272),³¹ *fain* as an adverb, which is constantly recurring as a handy equivalent of the German monosyllabic *gern* (I, 29, 75, 76, 80, 93, 115, 128, 178, 184, 196, 210; II, 23, 34, 81, 97, 132, 136, 147, 153, 165, 169, 180, 191, 217, 223, 247, 250, 274, 294), *vagrance* (I, 197), *childed* (II, 125), *joyance* (I, 115), *an* in the sense of *if* (I, 58), *eke* (I, 61), *drunken* in the predicative use (I, 64), the verb *won* or *wone*, of which Taylor uses the third person singular preterite indicative (I, 28), *fare* in the sense of *travel*, *proceed* (I, 45; II, 37), *fray* in the sense of *affray* (I, 63), *sprent* the preterite participle of *spreng* (II, 55, 302), *hight* (I, 17), *levin* (II, 253).

³⁰ These words are pronounced archaic or obsolete on the authority of the *Century Dictionary*.

³¹ Not only is the verb *dight* archaic, but Taylor has formed the preterite participle incorrectly. Cf. *Century Dictionary sub voce dight*, where the preterite participle is given as *dight*.

Dialectal is the form "aboon."³² It is "northern English or Scotch."³³ "Thee" as a nominative is a Quakerism.³⁴ It is the "perverted use of the obj. thee" affected by the Friends.³⁵ At least that seems a rather natural way of explaining it, for, while Bayard Taylor's "family was not formally in the Society of Friends, they adhered generally to the principles of the Society. His mother, although brought up in the Lutheran faith, became attached to the Quakers early in life, and taught her children the fundamental doctrines of the Society, as well as naturally adopted the manners and ways which prevailed in the region."³⁶ At times Taylor employed Quaker mannerisms in his letters.³⁷ But it is possible nonetheless that Taylor himself would have preferred to explain his "thee" nominative as Elizabethan usage.³⁸ "Already once" is a Teutonism in the line

Already once was I so blest.³⁹

Precisely what Bayard Taylor meant by the word *wreak* in such sentences as:

Body and soul thereon I'll wreak. (I, 76)

His grace the sculptors could not wreak. (II, 119)

I am not prepared to say; hardly *avenge*, *inflict*, or *execute*, yet these are the significations of that word.

The number of actual solecisms discoverable in Taylor's work is comparatively small. The "Century Dictionary" does not recognize the archaic *childed* in that sense in which it is

³² Cf. *Faust*, II, p. 4.

³³ Cf. *Century Dictionary* sub voce *aboon*.

³⁴ Cf. *Faust*, I, p. 66.

³⁵ Cf. *Century Dictionary* sub voce *thee*.

³⁶ Cf. *Life and Letters*, v, I, pp. 111-112.

³⁷ Cf. *Life and Letters*, v, I, p. 11.

³⁸ Cf. E. A. Abbott, *Shakespearian Grammar*, p. 141, § 212; "Verbs followed by *thee* instead of *thou* have been called reflexive. But though 'haste *thee*,' and some other phrases with verbs of motion, may be thus explained, and verbs were often thus used in E. E., it is probable that 'look *thee*,' 'hark *thee*,' are to be explained by euphonic reasons. *Thee*, thus used, follows imperatives which, being themselves emphatic, require an unemphatic pronoun. The Elizabethans reduced *thou* to *thee*."

³⁹ Cf. *Faust*, II, p. 115.

obviously employed by Taylor, as a synonym of *pregnant*.⁴⁰ It records no verb *to bliss*, as employed by Taylor in the line:

I blissed it all this livelong night. (I, 209)

And it does not recognize Taylor's adjective *impermeate*.⁴¹ It does not approve the noun *festal* as used by Taylor in the lines:

To festals calm and cheery. (II, 150)

Leading these festals cheery. (II, 151)

No excuse can be offered for *Worser* (II, 264), or the pleonastic *such like* (II, 270). Nor is it in accordance with English usage to say: *two only races* (II, 14), *out of place to* (I, 50), *prevent to do* (I, 63), *succeed to do* (I, 190), or

None ever see you, none are seen by you. (II, 142)

None of all the wooers here

Now around thee hover. (II, 25)

By this marvel profit none. (II, 124)

Bayard Taylor's inversions and other departures from normal English strike us by reason of their strangeness, not by reason of their felicity. At cost of them he has made no gain in charm, distinction or force. It is evident that when he composed his "Faust," German, not English, cadences were singing in his ear; and we are very ready to believe Professor Smyth when he says: "He knew by heart the entire First Part of 'Faust' and most of the Second; and he frequently made his translation from the ring of the original in his ear and not from a perusal of the printed page."⁴²

And after all this is but an instance of the Scylla and Charybdis, which is common to all translation, according to Wilhelm von Humboldt, who wrote: "Alles Übersetzen scheint

⁴⁰ Cf. *Faust*, II, p. 125.

⁴¹ Cf. *Faust*, I, p. 53. Cf. also *Life and Letters*, v. II, p. 553, where Taylor writes: "I thought the . . . 's would amuse you. Don't be deceived by the fellow seeming to know English. What he says of *impermeate* is infernal nonsense. I suppose he would say that *imingle* means not to mingle. He doesn't know that *im* is the Latin *inter* in this case, and perfectly correct." The blank doubtless is to be filled in with the name of the Rev. W. C. Wilkinson, who reviewed Taylor's *Faust* in the *Independent* and objected at considerable length to this word *impermeate*.

⁴² Cf. A. H. Smyth, *Bayard Taylor*, p. 182.

mir schlechterdings ein Versuch zur Auflösung einer unmöglichen Aufgabe. Denn jeder Übersetzer muss immer an einer der beiden Klippen scheitern, sich entweder auf Kosten des Geschmacks und Sprache seiner Nation zu genau an sein Original, oder auf Kosten seines Originals zu sehr an die Eigentümlichkeit seiner Nation zu halten. Das Mittel hierzwischen ist nicht bloss schwer, sondern geradezu unmöglich."⁴³

⁴³ This is an extract from a letter written by Humboldt to A. W. von Schlegel, July 23, 1796. It will be found quoted by Paul Cauer in *Die Kunst des Übersetzens*, p. 4.

CHAPTER IV

CONCERNING THE POETIC WORTH OF TAYLOR'S TRANSLATION

There are persons perhaps who would consider this chapter superfluous. Professor Barrett Wendell, for example, maintains that Bayard Taylor "never undertook to turn 'Faust' into an English poem,"¹ In this statement, it is probable that Professor Barrett Wendell intends that the accent shall rest upon the word "poem," since he had already told us that the translation "in nowise resembles normal English."² I think that Professor Barrett Wendell must be mistaken. If Bayard Taylor did not imagine that he was writing poetry, he would hardly have tricked out his translation, at cost of much patient toil, with all the outward garb of poetry, simply that it might the better remind us of what it was not.

We know that Taylor aspired to produce "nothing less than *the* English 'Faust,'"³ We know that when his work was done he was persuaded that he *had* produced "*the* English 'Faust,' which will henceforth be the only one."⁴ And we know furthermore that he believed that the production of such an English "Faust" was "the next thing to writing a great original epic."⁵ Mrs. Taylor says too that it was her husband's intention to make an English poem of "Faust." Therefore since it seems probable that Taylor intended his translation of "Faust" to be a poem, we are justified, I think, in inquiring whether it is or is not poetical.

Boyesen thinks, on the one hand, that it is poetical. He says: "Of the many translations of 'Faust,' I regard Bayard Taylor's as the best. Its shortcomings have been ably stated both

¹ Cf. Barrett Wendell, *Literary History of America*, p. 458.

² Cf. *ibid.*

³ Cf. *Life and Letters*, p. 458.

⁴ Cf. *Life and Letters*, p. 551.

⁵ Cf. *Life and Letters*, p. 511.

by friendly and unfriendly critics; but these are, to my mind, compensated for by a poetic afflatus which distinguishes the book and proves it to be the work of a poet. . . . I believe I am acquainted with all translations of 'Faust' into English, and I have, after much study, come to the conclusion that Taylor's unites more excellences than any of the others. If I were to state its claim to superiority in one word, I should say that, generally speaking, it is poetry."⁶ On the other hand, Mr. Dennett says: "That he (*i. e.*, the reader) really gets the poem *quâ* poem, apart from its metres, more fully and surely by reason of Mr. Taylor's labors in verse than if that gentleman had put his translation into prose or had corrected Hayward, we do not think; in our opinion the *poetical* translation of 'Faust' Mr. Taylor has not brought essentially nearer."⁷

After one has read diligently in the prefaces to "Faust" and in the letters written by Taylor while he was making his translation, and immediately after its publication, one carries away a single word as characteristic of the undertaking. This word is "labor." Thus Taylor reiterates: "I have at least labored long and patiently."⁸ "Such time as I can spare . . . is devoted to my translation of 'Faust'—a heart-rending yet intensely fascinating labor."⁹ "In concluding this labor of years."¹⁰ "I have been working day and night on 'Faust' since I saw you, and now that the work is just about finished, I shall feel thoroughly worn out, exhausted, used up, collapsed, effete, intellectually impotent. I only hope there will be some little recognition of my labors in the end."¹¹ "Yet, after all, the translation was not more laborious than the preparation of the Notes."¹² "The labor has been an immense advantage in the way of drill."¹³ "My labors on the First Part were so

⁶ Cf. H. H. Boyesen, *Essays on German Literature*, English Translations of Goethe, 1898, p. 119.

⁷ Cf. *Nation*, March 23, 1871, p. 201.

⁸ Cf. *Faust*, I, pref., p. xvi.

⁹ Cf. *Life and Letters*, p. 458.

¹⁰ Cf. *Faust*, II, pref., p. xiv.

¹¹ Cf. *Life and Letters*, p. 535.

¹² Cf. *Life and Letters*, p. 537.

¹³ Cf. *Life and Letters*, p. 537.

severe and steady that I narrowly escaped a fever, and some rest was absolutely necessary."¹⁴ "If my 'Faust' is what I mean it to be, it will have a permanent place in translated literature. No one else is likely, very soon, to undertake an equal labor."¹⁵ "There is long, severe, and conscientious labor in the volume."¹⁶ "In three weeks, D. V., the MS. of that (*i. e.*, the Second Part), also, will be completed; and I foresee that the long foregone freedom will make me seem quite lost and restless,—as a man suddenly thrust out of penitentiary, after seven years of solitary labor!"¹⁷ "When you see the volume (*i. e.*, the Second Part), you will guess how much laborious research was necessary."¹⁸ "The fact is, my labors in 'Faust' almost broke me down completely."¹⁹ "It (*i. e.*, 'Faust') cost me years of the severest labor."²⁰ "It (*i. e.*, 'Faust') was by no means a happy inspiration: it was the result of hard and honest labor."²¹ We can imagine many excellent things resulting from so much labor—but hardly poetry.²²

¹⁴ Cf. *Life and Letters*, p. 539.

¹⁵ Cf. *Life and Letters*, p. 540.

¹⁶ Cf. *Life and Letters*, p. 549.

¹⁷ Cf. *Life and Letters*, p. 549.

¹⁸ Cf. *Life and Letters*, p. 552.

¹⁹ Cf. *Life and Letters*, p. 561.

²⁰ Cf. *Life and Letters*, p. 631.

²¹ Cf. *Lippincott*, August, 1879, p. 211. These quotations suggest a line in the *American Literature* of Miss K. L. Bates (p. 194): "The master of 'towered Cedar-croft' was still the terrible toiler." Cf. also *Works of Percy Bysshe Shelley*, edited by Harry Buxton Forman, London, 1880, v. VII, p. 137: "I appeal to the greatest poets of the present day, whether it is not an error to assert that the finest passages of poetry are produced by labour and study. The toil and the delay recommended by critics, can be justly interpreted to mean no more than a careful observation of the inspired moments, and an artificial connexion of the spaces between their suggestions by the intertexture of conventional expressions; a necessity only imposed by the limitedness of the poetic faculty itself; for Milton conceived the *Paradise Lost* as a whole before he executed it in portions. We have his own authority also for the muse having 'dictated' to him the 'unpremeditated song.' And let this be an answer to those who would allege the fifty-six various readings of the first line of the *Orlando Furioso*. Compositions so produced are to poetry what mosaic is to painting."

²² Cf. *North American Review*, v. 128, p. 508: "His (*i. e.*, Taylor's) method was rather the method of painstaking labor than of quick insight.

Taylor once wrote concerning translation to an acquaintance, and remarked incidentally relative to his own method: "What would you say to my hunting up twenty or thirty synonyms for every chief word in a quatrain, and then spending two or three hours in making them fit in the best possible form?"²³ We should say that such a process might produce a curious, an ingenious mosaic of no little intellectual interest—but hardly poetry.

Some thirty years before Taylor published his "Faust," a writer in *Blackwood's Magazine* considered the subject of the poetical translation of the poem. His advice to the prospective translator of "Faust" in verse may be reduced to that given the Dichter by the Director:

So commandirt die Poesie!²⁴

The translator's verses may not order him about, they may not drive him to vagaries of sentence structure, of vocabulary, of grammar. For all these things emphasize the unreality of the vehicle, the impotence of the poet. "What we desire to be made to feel to a great extent in every work of art, is the *power* of the artist. We behold nothing worth looking at, unless we behold him exercising a triumphant mastery over untractable and refractory materials. Like Van Amburgh with his tigers, he must make language lie down at his feet, kiss his hands, and follow him whithersoever he will. But when we find him permitting his verse to interfere with the natural

On one occasion . . . a hearer said to him that his method recalled a visit he had made, a few days before, to the studio of Church, who had on his easel the celebrated picture of Niagara . . . the visitor put to the artist the obvious question, 'How soon will the work be finished?' The artist measured the canvas with his eye, and quietly said that, at the rate of his proceeding, so many days in the week, so many hours in the day, the picture would be completed in about two weeks. He worked steadily, gaining ground inch by inch, and was certain that, if each detail was conscientiously executed, the final result would be harmonious to the eye and true to nature. Mr. Taylor was struck and gratified by the comparison. 'Yes,' said he, 'that is the way. Put the parts together, and you make the whole.' But this is not the way of genius; and genius, it is commonly allowed, Mr. Taylor had not. He may have had what is more serviceable, but he had not that."

²³ Cf. *Life and Letters*, p. 551.

²⁴ Cf. l. 221.

idiom and arrangement of his speech, we behold this exhibition reversed; the language has here got the upper hand of the artist, and we are made sensible of nothing but his weakness—an unpleasing object of contemplation at all times.”²⁵ Elsewhere we think we have shown that Bayard Taylor has done many of those things which he ought not to have done. “His language,” to use the words of yet another English reviewer concerning yet another doer of “Faust” into English verse, “is hardly ever natural or idiomatic, hardly ever such as any human being but a namby-pamby rhymester would employ; the adjectives follow and precede the substantives, and the nominatives and accusatives the verbs, not according to any rules of grammar or idiom, but according as may be found necessary to complete the scanning or final jingle of the lines; and when, as often happens, the most forced inversion proves insufficient to supply the required quantity or accentuation of syllables, it is” Bayard Taylor’s “wont to add or substitute some wretched nonsense of his own.”²⁶

We are warranted, I think, in requiring of Taylor’s translation, as Professor Calvin Thomas requires of Goethe’s “Faust,” that both parts “stand or fall as poetry.”²⁷ In the case of Taylor’s “Faust” we cannot add, as Professor Thomas does of Goethe’s: “And they are going to stand.” The truth of the matter is this. If we judge by the eye alone, Bayard Taylor’s “Faust” certainly does resemble Goethe’s “Faust.” There is the same varying length of line, the same masses of recitative *vers irréguliers* relieved by stanzaic lyrics, the same infrequent patches of prose; and all these things in just that order with which we are familiar in Goethe. If we judge by the ear alone, Bayard Taylor’s “Faust” still resembles Goethe’s “Faust,” although not as closely as when we judged by the eye. There is the same alternation of varying meters, the same feet and the same cadences assume much their wonted order, there is usually rime where Goethe has taught us to expect it, there is usually none where Goethe has omitted it,

²⁵ Cf. *Blackwood’s Magazine*, v. 47, p. 223.

²⁶ Cf. *Fraser*, v. p. 88; review of Blackie’s and Syme’s translations.

²⁷ Cf. *Goethe’s Faust*, edited by Calvin Thomas, v. II, pref., p. 1.

and in several cases there is a reproduction of an original leonine rime.²⁸

It is when we come to judge Bayard Taylor's "Faust" with our intelligence and our aesthetic sense that we conclude it is not poetry, and that too quite aside from occasional prosy, awkward, inelegant or sometimes unparsable lines like these:

. . . for any

Will finally, himself, his bit select. (I, 5)

. . . what mean perturbation

Thee, superhuman, shakes. (I, 22)

That brain, alone, not loses hope. (I, 26)

Who knows not their sense
(These elements),—
Their properties
And power not sees,—
No mastery he inherits
Over the Spirits. (I, 52)

Thyself hast led thyself into the meshes. (I, 58)

Brightlier
Build it again. (I, 65)

Each one learns only—just what learn he can. (I, 80)

Allow me that my album first I reach you. (I, 81)

I feel so small before others. (I, 82)

Yet always doesn't the thing succeed. (I, 114)

Yourself, perhaps, would keep the bubble. (I, 119)

Ladies with him delighted are. (I, 134)

Your courtesy an easy grace is. (I, 139)

My darling, who shall dare
"I believe in God!" to say. (I, 157)

Live with the like of him, may I never. (I, 159)

Thou, monster, wilt nor see nor own
How this pure soul, of faith so lowly,
So loving and ineffable,—
The faith alone
That her salvation is,—with scruples holy
Pines, lest she hold as lost the man she loves so well. (I, 161)

. . . For painful is it
To bring no gift when her I visit. (I, 170)

That arbitrarily, here, ourselves we isolate. (I, 183)

²⁸ Cf. *Faust*, I, p. 40; II, p. 101.

But there enigmas also knotted be.	(I, 186)
Go a-foot no more we can.	(I, 201)
Like water in leaky pipes—don't come.	(II, 12)
But deepliest hidden, wisdom may detect it.	(II, 14)
Motley fancies blossom may.	(II, 24)
Know that, given to me for wearing,	
Lately were the shears supplied.	(II, 31)
Steel and poison I, not malice,	
Mix and sharpen for the traitor.	(II, 33)
Through the crowd you see it wend not.	(II, 37) ²⁹
But, clearer seen, 'tis slave that fights with slave.	(II, 100)
Then they conceive, themselves have found it out.	(II, 91)
How should these dark surroundings suit his	
Desires, when them I scarce can bear.	(II, 99)
The mimic woods enkindled are.	(II, 53)
I've not said nothing, that I know.	(II, 100)
To whom the Impossible is lure	
I love.	(II, 123)
If she, in a single night,	
The Pygmies brought to light,	
Pygmies of all she'll create yet,	
And each find his mate yet.	(II, 128)
I try the tall one, yet she worse is.	(II, 134)
Three have we brought hither,	
The fourth refused us altogether:	
He was the right one, said he,—	
Their only thinker ready.	(II, 150)
And where to move, thy will be free.	(II, 157)
So spake he, urging my departure; but no thing	
Of living breath did he, who ordered thus, appoint,	
That shall, to honor the Olympian Gods, be slain.	(II, 167)
Kindest one, thee,—we, the happy.	(II, 168)
This the king not indicated.	(II, 180)
Ah, may not to us the tones not also,	
Stead of deliverance promised,	
Ruin announce at the last!—	
Us, the swan-like and slender,	
Long white throated, and She,	
Our fair swan begotten.	(II, 189)

²⁹ The *not* in this sentence ought properly to modify *see*, which one would hardly guess from its present position.

- . . . sport of every breeze
 That blows mischance or luck! and neither ever ye
 Supported calmly. (II, 190)
 . . . One is sure to contradict
 The others fiercely, and cross-wise the others her. (II, 190)
 And all was over with the West. (II, 196)
 Majesty here not withholds its
 Sequestered raptures. (II, 201)
 And thus warns the faithful father: "Dwells in earth the
 forms elastic." (II, 209)
 That me hath won. (II, 213)
 Danger his arrogance brings. (II, 220)
 Queens, of course, are satisfied everywhere. (II, 224)
 For allure us yonder distant, richly-mantled mountain ranges.
 (II, 225)
 Yes! mine eyes not err. (II, 228)
 'Tis nothing new whatever that one hears. (II, 234)
 The riot rose, the riot was consecrated. (II, 237)
 Not man, nor God, nor Devil, him could save. (II, 245)
 Must personally be worthy of the same. (II, 246)
 Swift shall he punish when he learns the truth—the latter.
 (II, 268)
 Gave the mandate not the herald. (II, 274)
 The royal wealth
 Displease him must. (II, 278)
 Inwardly his darkness dense is. (II, 290)
 Nothing, indeed, can longer one confide in. (II, 296)
 Tricked so in one's old days, a great disgust is. (II, 304)
 Thou, in immaculate ray,
 Mercy not leavest. (II, 311)
 Thou Thy presence not deniest. (II, 312)
 Will richer love us. (II, 313)

We shall hunt up and down the five hundred odd pages of Taylor's text in vain for any couplet that we may set over against Shelley's:

The giant-snouted crags, ho! ho!
 How they snort and how they blow!

That is true of the verses of Taylor's "Faust" which was said of other verses of Taylor. They are "most distinctly not

born *nympharum sanguinis*—not flush with immortal youth, full of the *lux alma* of the other world. Metrical difficulties of astonishing intricacy are overcome in some of the lyrics . . . but there is no vivifying breath, no line that sticks, or stings, or sings."³⁰ That Bayard Taylor's translation is not poetic should surprise no one.

To produce a lineal, literal, rime and rhythm preserving translation of "Faust" is a task greater than any man has yet performed. To require that such a translation be also poetical is to demand the impossible.³¹ But even if Bayard Taylor had not bent his efforts toward the production of a facsimile of the outward "Faust," I still question whether he could have given us a poetic "Faust." Taylor was a journalist rather than a poet. He lacked the nice discrimination of a poet. Ideas came to him in such form as would have made them serve admirably as leaders in the *Tribune*, but he insisted on making poems of them. Thus the self-conscious virtue of the Transcendentalists, and their confident belief in their ability to direct their own destiny, were repellant to Bayard Taylor. So he made the thing into a poem and called it "My Mission."³² He discovered that the uses of the flesh are not all sinful, and that one may be righteous without church affiliations, and he made a poem about that, calling it "Penn Calvin."³³ He was much displeased at the suggested substitution of physiology for sentiment as a basis for love and marriage. He put the matter into poetry and called it "Cupido."³⁴

"The Masque of the Gods" and "Prince Deukalion" are exaggerated examples of this lack of nice discrimination. "The Masque of the Gods" has been described as "an essay in comparative theology written in the form of a dramatic

³⁰ Cf. *Critic*, v. 2, p. 195.

³¹ Cf. *Nation*, v. 29, p. 387, "We leave out of account in our censures such poetical translations as Taylor's 'Faust,' and, perhaps, Longfellow's 'Dante,' for translating poetry is, after all, contending with impossibilities."

³² Cf. *The Poems of Bayard Taylor*, 1866, p. 254. This poem is omitted in the definitive edition of 1902.

³³ Cf. *The Poetical Works of Bayard Taylor*, Household Edition, 1902, p. 312.

³⁴ Cf. *The Poetical Works of Bayard Taylor*, Household Edition, 1902, p. 149.

poem.”³⁵ The seat of the evil in “Prince Deukalion” has been indicated facetiously in this wise: “It would in any case require great skill to make us see a real woman in a being who has been labelled at the beginning the Mediaeval Ecclesiastical System; and neither in her case nor in the other characters, whose principle of life is not so plain, has Mr. Taylor breathed into his creations any very vigorous life or brought about any illusion.”³⁶ In brief, Bayard Taylor had the intelligence of a well-trained journalist; he had not the emotions or the nice discrimination of a poet.

That he was still the journalist when he translated “Faust” was emphasized in an article which appeared a few days after his death. “To point out this stimulating, strengthening, educating tendency of his literary work is only another way of saying that in his books as elsewhere he was first of all a journalist. As a journalist it was his business to make his learning vicarious; he observed and studied that other men might know; he wrote as a journalist must whose gift and duty it is to give to others the fruits of his activity; whose business it is to inform himself in order that he may inform his readers, and to cultivate himself in order that his judgments may be sound, his thinking wise, his teaching wholesome. Whithersoever he went and whatever he did he was always the journalist above everything else, and whatever form circumstances might give to the productions of his pen, whether he wrote articles for newspapers, books or lectures, his work was always essentially that of the journalist enthusiastically eager to share with the public whatever he knew or thought or felt. . . . So, too, in his translation of ‘Faust,’ which, upon the surface, appears to have been a purely literary work, the impulse of the journalist is present. It was because he saw in ‘Faust’ that which English-speaking men had never had an opportunity to see, that he sought, in translating the poem, to

³⁵ Cf. *New York Evening Post*, April 6, 1872.

³⁶ Cf. *Nation*, v. 27, p. 337. Cf. also review of *Prince Deukalion*, *Athenaeum*, no. 2666, p. 686, “Our author will make few converts, for he will obtain few readers. He has something to say, but it is doubtful if verse is the best medium by aid of which to say it. It is at least a medium in which he works with difficulty.”

give us Goethe's masterpiece in its fulness. It was precisely as if he had discovered such a poem in manuscript somewhere, and had sent it to the *Tribune* as a piece of news. He had news of a grander poem in 'Faust' than English-speaking men had yet known in it, and it was to tell that news that he made his supremely good translation."³⁷

Moreover, the translation of "Faust" is written in Bayard Taylor's second manner, which is even less poetical than his first manner.³⁸ Taylor's first manner, which he affected for a considerable period, largely because it enabled him to sail the seas of literature prosperously from the start,³⁹ was characterized by an immature exuberance of rhetoric,⁴⁰ which might have been made to serve more artistic ends, had Taylor enjoyed the advantage of intelligent criticism. Intelligent criticism, however, came to Taylor sparsely, partly because the critics were not inclined to give it to him, partly because he himself did not wish it. Much literary criticism in America, at the time Taylor put his earliest volumes of poetry upon the market, savored of *opéra bouffe*.⁴¹ Frequently it was recklessly en-

³⁷ Cf. *New York Evening Post*, December 20, 1878.

³⁸ Cf. *Nation*, v. 39, p. 401: "In Bayard Taylor's growth, however, there seem to have been two lives, so marked was the change in his nature; and he has, in fact, left two reputations in consequence—one widespread and established, the other narrower in its range and of doubtful permanence."

³⁹ Cf. *Athenaeum*, no. 2670, p. 853: "As is not uncommon in the case of clever citizens of the United States, he (*i. e.*, Taylor) considered himself fitted for the vocation of a poet. There are few villages in the States which do not contain several young men and women who are ranked among poets because they are assiduous in writing verses. More fortunate than thousands of his countrymen and countrywomen, this aspirant for fame saw his verses in print, an easy thing in a land abounding in newspapers filled with gratuitous contributions, but he attained the rare distinction of being paid for his early rhymes. They appeared in the *New York Mirror* and *Graham's Magazine*, and yielded their author forty dollars."

⁴⁰ Cf. *Critic*, v. 2, p. 169: "He (*i. e.*, Taylor) delighted in the ornate, the sonorous, the rhetorical."

⁴¹ As a specimen of the informality of the literary comment of that time, we submit a paragraph from a reputable magazine (Cf. *Graham's Magazine*, December, 1848, Editor's Table, p. 366): "A life-like portrait of our friend and co-laborer, J. B. Taylor, graces this number of the Magazine. We know our readers—our fair ones especially—will admire him; and we would remark, *en passant*, for their information that well-

comiastic or unconvincingly vituperative. Toward Taylor it was so friendly⁴² that it became common to speak of his "good luck."⁴³

The plaudits of the critics were agreeable to Taylor. He had a life-long aversion to harsh or corrective criticism. I presume that is why men like Longfellow, Lowell, Whittier, Mr. Stedman and Mr. Howells, who could have given him

looking (*sic*) as he unquestionably is, his merits in this particular are fully equalled by his good qualities of head and heart."

Cf. also *John Godfrey's Fortunes*, ed. of 1865, p. 227; "John Godfrey" is speaking of *Leonora's Dream, and Other Poems*, but we may assume, I think, that it is really Bayard Taylor speaking of *Ximena, and Other Poems*. He says: "All these notices I cut out and carefully preserved in a separate pocket of my portfolio. I have them still. The other day, as I took them out and read them over with an objective scrutiny in which no shadow of my former interest remained, I was struck with the vague, mechanical stamp by which they are all characterized. I sought in vain for a single line which showed the discrimination of an enlightened critic. The fact is, we had no criticism, worthy of the name, at that time. Our literature was tenderly petted, and its diffuse, superficial sentiment was perhaps even more admired than its first attempts at a profounder study of its own appropriate themes and a noble assertion of its autonomy. That brief interregnum in England, during which such writers as Moir, B. Simmons, T. K. Hervey, and Alaric A. Watts enjoyed a delusive popularity, had its counterpart on our side of the Atlantic. All our gentle, languishing echoes found spell-bound listeners, whom no one—with, perhaps, the single exception of Poe—had the will to disenchant."

⁴² Thus the *Albion* (November 8, 1851) makes Taylor in a breath equal to Shelley and superior to Keats and Tennyson. A reviewer in the *Literary World* (January 13, 1849), who granted that "Mr. Taylor's volume . . . is an advance upon his previous publication" and conceded that "much is to be allowed to youthful enthusiasm, in an author who always preserves delicacy and taste, and who must soon learn to be the severest judge of his own productions," said furthermore that "all is not poetry which goes trippingly" and that he "could have wished indeed something of restraint in the rhetoric." This discordant note in the general chorus of Taylor's praise, was more or less drowned out by Edgar Allan Poe's indignant trumpetings of remonstrance. (Cf. Poe, *Literati*, p. 207.) No one seems to have perceived that the great poet rushed to Taylor's defense not because he loved Taylor and his poetry more but because he loved the reviewer of the *Literary World* considerably less.

⁴³ Cf. *N. Y. Evening Post*, November 21, 1863: "He (*i. e.*, Taylor) has won the smiles of enterprising publishers, if not the plaudits of approving readers, and in no way has he suffered from the embarrassments of authorship, excepting, perhaps, those which follow an unusual run of good luck." Cf. *Southern Literary Messenger*, v. 18, p. 13: "The rise of Mr. Bayard

helpful criticism, never (as far as we can judge from their printed letters to him) attempted to prune his talent. They sent him pleasant letters of congratulation on the appearance of his various works, and, as Professor Woodberry says, "he hoarded up his commendations from 'the poets,' and over-valued their meaning."⁴⁴ James T. Fields once ventured to find some lines in "Notus Ignoto" unpoetical. The futility of his or any similar effort at criticism is patent from Taylor's reply, which runs in part: "Like similar things of Shelley, it may be read here and there with a wrong accent, and I suspect this is just what you have done. Of all your criticisms I only feel that what you say of the last two lines of the first stanza is partly true. Those lines are rather grave and heavy for the airy, spiritual movement of the poem. The other lines which you call 'especially bad,' are not only good but some of them *especially good*, and I don't know that I can change one of them."⁴⁵

Of Taylor's better work in his first manner, the "Bedouin Song" may fairly serve as an example. It fails to carry the conviction of a genuine love lyric, because, like Heine's "Erklärung,"⁴⁶ although in less degree, it "doth protest too much" and too loudly; the "superb refrain"⁴⁷ is prejudicial to the

Taylor in the literary world has been exceedingly rapid. Five years ago he was altogether unknown; now he figures in the common-place books of selected poetry, and disputes with Halleck and Willis the first place in lyrical composition on this side of the Atlantic. . . . Mr. Bayard Taylor has been uniformly lucky in his literary enterprises. We say lucky because while we are ready to accord him all rightful praise (and that warmly) we are yet of the opinion that his rise has not been altogether legitimate and that there has been an uncommon degree of humbug in the manner of achieving it."

⁴⁴ Cf. *Nation*, v. 39, p. 401. Cf. Trent, *History of American Literature*, p. 463: "Lowell pronounced the latter (*i. e.*, *Picture of St. John*) to be the most finished and sustained American poem, with the exception of Longfellow's *Golden Legend*. This judgment is typical of the over-enthusiastic reception Taylor's kind friends, who loved the man and knew his aspirations, constantly accorded to his work in verse."

⁴⁵ Cf. *Life and Letters*, p. 505.

⁴⁶ Cf. *Heine's Sämtliche Werke*, herausgegeben von Prof. Dr. Ernst Elster, v. I, p. 170.

⁴⁷ Mr. Stedman (*Scribner's Monthly*, v. 19, p. 81) says, speaking of the *Bedouin Song*, "the refrain is superb." Later when he came to revise his article on Taylor (*Poets of America*) he eliminated this statement.

illusion of sincerity, it degenerates readily into a jingle. The poem, in short, betrays the weakness of Taylor's first manner. It is unduly rhetorical. But if rhetoric was the weakness of Taylor's first manner, it was also its strength, a fact of which Taylor himself was apparently aware. When he sat once incognito in judgment upon his writings, he wrote: "His (*i. e.*, Taylor's) rhetoric is at the same time his strength and his weakness, for it has often led him away from the true substance of poetry."⁴⁸ Rhetoric was Taylor's strength because it helped cover up his paucity of thought,⁴⁹ because it gave a swing and dash to his work that frequently created the illusion of poetry, because it helped disguise the fact from not-too-discerning eyes that Taylor's verses lack "spontaneity. His poetry is all *intended*. It is carefully built up by the intellect. The reader searches in vain for an escape from the intellectual; Taylor never gives the rein to the spirit. The reader is surprised by no sudden glories of the imagination, for Taylor never seems to look forth from those 'magic casements, opening on the foam of perilous seas in Faery lands forlorn!'"⁵⁰

Bayard Taylor's second manner is usually ascribed to the influence of his German studies.⁵¹ His critics call the work of his second period metaphysical.⁵² Taylor himself preferred

⁴⁸ Cf. *Echo Club*, p. 126.

⁴⁹ Cf. Trent, *History of American Literature*, p. 463: "Furthermore, for the first and only time in his life (*i. e.*, while translating *Faust*) he was under no necessity to seek for the intellectual and emotional profundity which he knew must characterize a great poem, but which he could never attain. In other words, that support of a greater mind which Arnold thought Shelley needed, Bayard Taylor much more surely needed and found in Goethe."

⁵⁰ Cf. Smyth, *Bayard Taylor*, p. 268.

⁵¹ Cf. *Nation*, v. 39, p. 401: "In these last years, too, there was an expansion of his intellectual nature and a sharpening of his artistic perception, due in large measure to his study of Goethe, who overmastered his mind and determined the character of the latest products of his genius."

⁵² Cf. *Scribner's Monthly*, v. 19, p. 81: "Of late years, in his desire to convey his deeper, more intellectual thought and conviction, he frequently became involved, and a metaphysical vagueness was apparent even in his lyrics."

Cf. also *North American Review*, v. 104, p. 294, review of *Picture of St. John* by Lowell: "We could spare without regret a number of stanzas in which Mr. Taylor philosophizes, for the metaphysical is certainly not his

to call it psychological.⁵³ At any rate, it involved the forswearing of rhetoric and the endeavor to pursue "the true substance of poetry." Robbed of their rhetoric, Taylor's verses appeared more and more unpoetic. It is to this period that his "Faust"-translation belongs.

In a certain sense Bayard Taylor's "Faust" is not English. In a certain sense it is not Goethe. Taylor has given us the form of "Faust" with photographic fidelity at times.⁵⁴ But he has Latinized, sophisticated, diluted, padded, and stripped off poetry⁵⁵ until all vital semblance of the original has been lost. The translation inspires the reader with an unqualified admi-

strongest point. He is happiest when he looks about him and gathers into sheaves of verse the harvest of his eye. When he undertakes to expound the laws of the mind, he becomes misty, and therefore tedious. The artist, when he volunteers to be his own lawyer in these matters, hath a fool to his client."

⁵³ Cf. *Aus Zwei Weltteilen*, p. 159: "Was jene metaphysisch nannten, bezeichnete Taylor jedoch als psychologisch."

⁵⁴ Cf. Barrett Wendell, *Literary History of America*, p. 458: "Whatever the positive value of his translation, he achieved one rare practical result. By simply comparing his work with Goethe's original, persons who know very little German can feel the power and the beauty of Goethe's style, as well as of his meaning." Cf. also *Westminster Review*, 1871, p. 568: "Mr. Taylor's version is a photograph, with the unavoidable faults of a photograph."

⁵⁵ Cf. *Springfield Republican*, January 2, 1871: "For translating poems, it is first needful that one should be a poet. Mr. Taylor is one, nominally, but not in reality,—his mind has the hard prosaic character, very similar to one side of Goethe's—but on the other side, the great German was a lofty and inspired poet. Inspiration is exactly what Mr. Taylor lacks, and, consequently, he can never inspire his readers. His version even when mechanically exact, and indeed felicitous in its choice of words, as it often is, lacks the nameless charm that we find in the translations of Shelley and Longfellow and Coleridge, from the same language. None of these were (*sic*) so familiar with German as Mr. Taylor is, but they all had, each in his way, 'the vision and the faculty divine,' which may mislead a translator but is sure to please his readers."

Cf. *St. Louis Republican*, review of *Faust*: "If we miss much of the music of the original and much of the something which has no name, but is the exclusive property of the high priests of poetry, who wed 'perfect music unto noble words' we are not surprised. Translations—the French very aptly call them *traductions*—are after all translations, and Mr. Taylor might have added to the motto on his title page:

Wer den Dichter will verstehen,
Muss des Dichter (*sic*) Sprache lernen."

ration for the patience, zeal and industry of Bayard Taylor, but it affords him little pleasure, nor does it perform that higher office of a good translation, so potently to suggest the charm of the original as to win readers for Goethe in the German.⁵⁶

In short, it meets no one of the three demands, which may reasonably be made upon it by the person for whom the translation was obviously intended—the English-speaking person of culture who knows no German but would still make the acquaintance of “Faust.” I hold therefore that it is an inadequate translation. Like a certain English reviewer I am at a loss to understand how it has “usurped the position of standard.”⁵⁷ Nor do I comprehend, I confess, the esteem, both for poetic and general excellence, in which this translation is held by certain eminent German authorities.⁵⁸

⁵⁶ Cf. Goethe, *Maximen und Reflexionen*, III: “Uebersetzer sind als geschäftige Kuppler anzusehen, die uns eine halbverschleierte Schöne als höchst liebenswürdig anpreisen; sie erregen eine unwiderstehliche Neigung nach dem Original.”

⁵⁷ Cf. *Saturday Review*, v. 67, p. 577: “He (*i. e.*, Birds) does not compare disadvantageously with the late Mr. Bayard Taylor, who has (we never quite knew how) apparently attained or usurped the position of standard.”

⁵⁸ Cf. *Herrig's Archiv*, v. 99, p. 437, review of McLintock's *Faust* by Richard M. Meyer.

Cf. *Herrig's Archiv*, v. 91, p. 284, review of Sabatier's *Faust* by Arn. Krause.

Cf. *Goethe-Jahrbuch*, v. 2, p. 439, *Zu einer Stelle in Faust*, in which article G. v. Loeper speaks of the “nicht genug zu rühmenden Faust-Uebersetzung” of Bayard Taylor.

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²This article I was obliged to consult in a scrap-book of *Faust* reviews prepared by Mrs. Bayard Taylor, and now preserved in the library of Cornell University. The editors of the *St. Louis Republican* were not able to supply the missing date, since their journal is indexed only for more recent years.

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VITA

Juliana Catherine Shields was born in Norwich, Connecticut, on the twenty-fourth of January, 1875, and was educated in the public schools of that city. In 1894 she entered the private school of Fräulein Pauline Lange, in Berlin, Germany, where she remained until 1898. During this period she heard lectures by Professor Erich Schmidt at the University of Berlin and at the Victoria Lyceum, and was privately instructed by Professor Elise Bartels and Frau Dr. Hempel. From January to June, 1898, she taught Mathematics and Latin at the Norwich Free Academy. From September, 1898, to July, 1899, she taught German at the same institution. July 1st, 1899, she married Henry S. Haskell, Yale, '92. In September, 1900, she entered the University of Cincinnati, where she studied exclusively under Professor Edward M. Brown and Professor Max Poll. In September, 1902, she entered Barnard College and received in 1904 the degree of A.B., and in 1905 the degree of A.M. Since 1904 she has been continuously in residence at Columbia University.



